ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY

1826-1907

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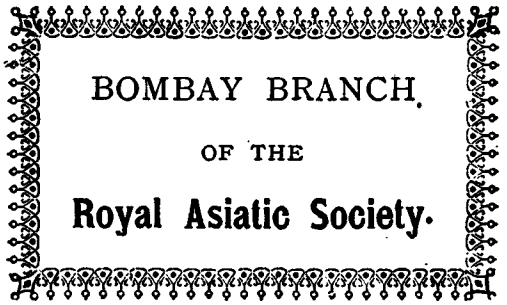

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ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY

EDITED BY CHARLES HOLME

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PREFATORY NOTE

In selecting the forty pictures reproduced in facsimile colours in this volume the Editor has endeavoured to present, as far as possible, the work of the most distinguished artists who have been connected with the Royal Scottish Academy during the last eighty years. But owing to the necessary limitation of the number of plates, it has been impossible to include a work by every artist who, it might be considered, should be represented.

The Editor desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to the President and Council of the Royal Scottish Academy for the permission to reproduce the portraits and letters from their Library, and especially to the Secretary, Mr. W. D. McKay, R.S.A., who has rendered valuable assistance in the compilation of Mr. Baldry's exhaustive record. Also to Mr. P. McOmish Dott for the help he has given in connection with the illustrations, and to the following owners who have kindly lent their pictures for reproduction :—Mr. G. B. Anderson ; Mr. Walter Bain ; Mrs. Barton ; Mr. Robert H. Brechin ; Mr. T. Austen Brown, A.R.S.A. ; Mr. J. H. Balfour Browne, K.C. ; Mr. Andrew Carnegie ; Mr. Thomas Hall Cooper ; Mr. A. Cameron Corbett, M.P. ; Messrs. Aitken Dott & Son ; Mr. D. B. Dott, F.R.S.E. ; Mr. William Duncan ; Mr. David Farquharson, A.R.A., A.R.S.A. ; Mrs. Kennedy Fraser ; Mr. John R. Greig ; Mr. Wolf Harris ; Mr. John Jordan ; Mrs. Lindsay ; Mr. Charles Lodder ; Miss McGaw ; Mr. W. B. Mackay ; Charles H. Mackie, A.R.S.A. ; Mr. David MacNeill ; Mrs. Arthur Melville ; Mr. J. Coutts Michie, A.R.S.A. ; Mr. Robert Noble, R.S.A. ; Mr. John Ramsay ; Mr. Walter A. Reid ; Mr. Alexander F. Roberts ; Mr. Alexander Rose ; Mr. Henry Silver ; Mr. D. Croal Thomson ; Mr. E. A. Walton, R.S.A. ; and Mr. James Wilson.

SCOTTISH ACADEMY OF PAINTING SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

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I. "Tantallon Castle." By E. T. Crawford.
II. "Breaking the Bread." By R. Scott Lauder.
III. "When Angry Tempests Gather." By Horatio MacCulloch.
IV. "Luther at Erfurt." By Sir Noel Paton.
V. "Dunnottar Castle." By Sir William Fettes Douglas.
VI. "The 'Onconveniency' of Single Life." By Erskine Nicol.
VII. "Naworth Castle in a Storm." By Sam Bough.
VIII. "Benvenue." By Alexander Fraser.
IX. "Crab Catchers—a June Day." By William M'Taggart.
X. "On the Garry—Moonlight." By J. C. Wintour.
XI. "A Lonely Life." By Hugh Cameron.
XII. "Rain in Skye." By George Paul Chalmers.
XIII. "J. H. Balfour Browne, Esq., K.C." By Sir George Reid.
XIV. "The Wayside Pool." By W. D. McKay.
XV. "Drowsy Cronies." By Robert Alexander.
XVI. "Old Mill, Dordrecht." By J. Campbell Noble.
XVII. "Summer Evening—Muthill." By J. Lawton Wingate.
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XXII. "Grandfather's Stocking." By T. Austen Brown.
XXIII. "Miss Cecile Walton." By E. A. Walton.
XXIV. "Auxerre, France." By A. D. Reid.
XXV. "Frost in the Air." By A. K. Brown.
XXVI. "Lockett Croal Thomson." By John Lavery.
XXVII. "On the Tyne." By Robert Noble.
XXVIII. "The Wane of Sunset." By J. Coutts Michie.
XXIX. "Nell." By Alexander Roche.
XXX. "Loch Fuilas." By R. B. Nisbet.
XXXI. "Edinburgh from Craigleith." By James Paterson.
XXXII. "Bairnies Cuddle Doon." By R. Gemmell Hutchison.

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XXXV. "Bramble Gatherers." By James Cadenhead.
XXXVI. "La Señorita." By Charles H. Mackie.
XXXVII. "The Lobster." By Edwin Alexander.
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A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY FROM ITS FOUNDATION IN 1826 TO THE PRESENT TIME

(N.B.—The names of those whose work is represented in the following pages are printed in capital letters)

Foundation Members and Associates, 1826

MEM.	
	*E. T. CRAWFORD (A.)
	John Ewbank (M.)
	*Robert Gibb (A.)
	Patrick Gibson (M.)
	Thomas Hamilton (M.)
	Sir George Harvey (A.) (*President*, 1864–76)
	*David Octavius Hill (A.)
	*J. Horsburgh (Assoc. Engraver)
	Samuel Joseph (M.)
	Joseph B. Kidd (A.)
	W. H. Lizars (Assoc. Engraver)
	D. W. Mackenzie (A.)
	*Kenneth MacLeay (A.)
	*W. Miller (Assoc. Engraver)
	William Nicholson (M.)
	William Shiels (M.)
	*George Simson (A.)
	*William Simson (M.)
	John Stevens (A.)
	James Stevenson (M.)
	John Syme (M.)
	Patrick Syme (M.)
	GEORGE WATSON (M.) (*President*, 1826–37)
	William Smellie Watson (M.)
	*J. Francis Williams (M.)
1827	J. J. Audubon (Honorary)
1827	Alexander Fraser (Honorary)
1827	John Henning (Honorary)
1827	Sir William Jardine, Bart. (Honorary)
1827	Prideaux John Selby (Honorary)
1827	Thomas Sully (Honorary)
1827	James Wilson (Honorary)

MEM.	
1827	John Wilson (Honorary)
1828	George Cleghorn (Honorary)
1828	Percy Forster (Honorary)
1828	Thomas S. Good (Honorary)
1828	J. Johnston (Honorary)
1828	Samuel F. B. Morse (Honorary)
1829	F. Danby (Honorary)
1829	Robert Edmonstone (Honorary)
1829	William Etty (Honorary)
1829	Dr. Graville (Honorary)
1829	William Kidd (Honorary)
1829	John Martin (Honorary)
1829	David Roberts (Honorary)
1829	Mrs. Christina Robertson (Honorary)
1829	John Soane (Honorary)
1830	Sir William Allan (*President*, 1837—50)
1830	William Bonnar
1830	Thomas Duncan

ASSOC.	MEM.	
1830	—	Alexander Forbes
—	1830	John Graham Gilbert
—	1830	James Giles
—	1830	SIR JOHN WATSON GORDON (*President*, 1850—64)
—	1830	Sir Francis Grant
—	1830	Irvine of Rome (Honorary)
—	1830	ROBERT SCOTT LAUDER
—	1830	Sir Thomas Lawrence (Honorary)
—	1830	Charles Lees
—	1830	Lawrence MacDonald

* These artists withdrew after the first meeting, and some were subsequently re-elected.

ASSOC.	MEM.	
—	1830	Samuel Mackenzie
—	1830	Sir Daniel Macnee (*President*, 1876—82)
—	1830	William H. Playfair
—	1830	David Scott
—	1830	Sir Martin A. Shee (Honorary)
—	1830	Colvin Smith
—	1830	Clarkson Stanfield (Honorary)
—	1830	Sir John Steell
—	1830	James Stewart
—	1830	Rev. John Thomson (Honorary)
—	1830	William J. Thomson
—	1830	Henry Westmacott (Honorary)
1831	1834	Walter Geikie
1831	1832	Andrew Somerville
—	1832	John Burnet (Honorary)
—	1832	Alex. Nasmyth (Honorary)
—	1832	Sir David Wilkie (Honorary)
—	1833	Dr. Memes (Honorary)
1834	—	John Irvine
—	1834	W. H. Lizars (Honorary)
1834	1838	HORATIO MACCULLOCH
—	1835	A. Monro Binning (Honorary)
1835	—	William Dyce
—	1835	Montague Stanley (Honorary)
1835	—	Charles H. Wilson
1836	—	Macneil Macleay
1838	—	William Howison
1838	—	Montague Stanley
1839	1848	E. T. CRAWFORD
1839	1846	J. Eckford Lauder
1839	—	John Sheriff
1840	—	Alexander Fraser
1840	1848	William B. Johnston
1840	—	W. Calder Marshall
1841	1860	John Ballantyne
—	1841	Robert Hay (Honorary)
—	1841	Richard Morison (Honorary)
1841	1868	Arthur Perigal
1842	1845	John Adam Houston
1843	—	John Crawford Brown
1845	—	Mungo Burton
1845	1852	James Drummond
1846	1850	SIR NOEL PATON
1846	—	Alex. Handyside Ritchie
1846	1859	Gourlay Steell
1847	1851	John Faed
1848	—	Alexander Christie
1849	—	Thomas Faed
1849	—	John Glass
1849	1851	Patric Park
1850	1858	JAMES ARCHER
1851	1856	David Bryce
1851	1854	SIR WILLIAM FETTES DOUGLAS (*President*, 1882—1891)
1852	1859	William Brodie
1852	—	Robert Ronald MacIan
1852	1869	Robert Thorburn Ross
—	1853	Sir Francis Grant (Honorary)
—	1853	J. F. Lewis (Honorary)
—	1854	Paul de la Roche (Honorary)
—	1854	William Dyce (Honorary)
1854	1879	Robert Gavin
—	1854	Mrs. Fanny McIan (Honorary)
1855	1859	ERSKINE NICOL
1856	1875	SAMUEL BOUGH
1857	1865	Waller H. Paton
—	1857	John Philip (Honorary)
—	1857	Robert Thorburn (Honorary)
—	1858	Sir Charles Eastlake (Honorary)
1858	1862	ALEXANDER FRASER
1858	1863	ROBERT HERDMAN
—	1858	Lawrence Macdonald (Honorary)
1859	1869	HUGH CAMERON
1859	1870	WILLIAM M'TAGGART
—	1859	James Stewart (Honorary)
1859	—	JOHN CRAWFORD WINTOUR
1860	—	William Crawford
1860	—	Peter Graham
—	1861	W. Calder Marshall (Honorary)
—	1862	Thomas Faed (Honorary)
1862	1867	JOHN HUTCHISON
1862	1877	John B. Macdonald
—	1862	William Miller (Honorary)
1862	1885	Clark Stanton
1863	1871	J. M. Barclay
1865	—	Thomas Clark

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES

ASSOC.	MEM.	
1865	—	Keeley Halswelle
—	1866	Sir Edwin Landseer (Honorary)
—	1866	Sir Daniel Maclise (Honorary)
—	1866	Sir J. E. Millais, Bart. (Honorary)
1867	1871	GEORGE PAUL CHALMERS
1867	—	John MacWhirter
1868	1870	J. Dick Peddie
1869	1879	James Cassie
1869	1876	George Hay
1870	1880	Otto Theodor Leyde
1870	1880	Norman Macbeth
1870	1877	SIR GEORGE REID (*President*, 1891–1902)
1871	1884	William Beattie Brown
—	1871	Patrick Allan Fraser (Honorary)
—	1871	John Linnell (Honorary)
1871	1878	William E. Lockhart
—	1871	W. Q. Orchardson (Honorary)
—	1871	John Pettie (Honorary)
1871	1877	John Smart
1875	1881	William F. Vallance
1876	—	Sir R. Rowand Anderson
1877	—	James Docharty
—	1877	William Forrest (Honorary)
—	1877	Peter Graham (Honorary)
1877	1883	WILLIAM DARLING McKAY
1877	1886	David W. Stevenson
—	1877	Sir L. Alma-Tadema (Honorary)
1878	1888	ROBERT ALEXANDER
1878	1882	Robert Gibb
1878	1889	William B. Hole
—	1878	Lord Leighton (Honorary)
1879	—	Robert Anderson
1879	1892	J. CAMPBELL NOBLE
1879	1886	J. LAWTON WINGATE
1880	—	George Aikman
1880	—	R. P. Bell
1881	—	DAVID MURRAY
1882	—	DAVID FARQUHARSON
1882	1900	John Henry Lorimer
1882	1889	Robert MacGregor
—	1882	John MacWhirter (Honorary)
1883	1897	Patrick W. Adam
1883	—	Thomas Stuart Burnett
—	1883	Thomas Graham (Honorary)
1883	1895	G. W. Johnstone
—	1883	J. W. Oakes (Honorary)
1884	1892	Joseph Denovan Adam
—	1884	George A. Lawson (Honorary)
—	1885	John Mossman (Honorary)
1885	—	David G. Steell
1885	1896	W. G. Stevenson
1886	—	James Hamilton
1886	1895	Charles Martin Hardie
1886	—	ARTHUR MELVILLE
—	1887	Joseph Israels (Honorary)
—	1887	William Bell Scott (Honorary)
1888	1892	Sir James Guthrie (*President*, 1902)
1888	1898	G. Ogilvie Reid
1888	1902	THOMAS SCOTT
1889	—	T. AUSTEN BROWN
1889	1905	EDWARD A. WALTON
1892	1896	J. Hippolyte Blanc
1892	—	A. K. BROWN
1892	1902	G. Washington Browne
1892	1902	George Henry
1892	1896	John Honeyman
1892	1896	JOHN LAVERY
1892	1896	William Leiper
1892	1901	Pittendrigh Macgillivray
1892	—	Pollok J. Nisbet
1892	1903	ROBERT NOBLE
1892	—	ARCHIBALD D. REID
1893	—	John J. Burnet
1893	—	Henry W. Kerr
1893	—	C. G. H. Kinnear
1893	1905	John Kinross
1893	—	Alex. Marshall Mackenzie
1893	—	J. COUTTS MICHIE
1893	1902	ROBERT B. NISBET
1893	1905	W. Birnie Rhind
1893	—	David Robertson
1893	1900	ALEXANDER ROCHE
—	1896	Sir R. Rowand Anderson (Honorary)
1896	—	JAMES PATERSON

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES

ASSOC.	MEM.	
—	1896	Sir E. J. Poynter (Honorary)
1896	—	Wellwood Rattray
1896	—	R. Payton Reid
1896	—	Joseph Thorburn Ross
1898	—	W. S. MacGeorge
1898	—	W. Y. MacGregor
1901	—	R. GEMMELL HUTCHISON
1901	—	WILLIAM WALLS
1902	—	EDWIN ALEXANDER
1902	—	ROBERT BURNS
1902	—	JAMES CADENHEAD
1902	—	CHARLES H. MACKIE
1902	—	A. McFarlane Shannon
—	1902	James M'Neill Whistler (Honorary)
1903	—	John Bowie
1903	—	Robert S. Lorimer
1904	—	ROBERT BROUGH
1904	—	D. Y. CAMERON
1904	—	J. CAMPBELL MITCHELL
1906	—	R. M. Coventry
1906	—	James Miller
1906	—	Percy H. Portsmouth

LIST OF HONORARY PROFESSORS OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY

ELECTED	
1830	Rev. Dr. Chalmers
1830	Professor Jameson
1830	Dr. John Lizars
1830	Professor Pyper
1830	Professor John Wilson
1851	The Very Rev. Principal Lee
1854	Professor Forbes
1854	David Laing, LL.D.
1855	Professor Blackie
1860	Rev. Dr. Arnot
1861	Professor J. Y. Simpson
1870	Dr. W. F. Skene
1877	Rev. Dr. Macgregor
1878	Sir Arthur Mitchell, LL.D.
1878	Sir William Turner, M.B., F.R.S.
1896	Joseph Anderson, LL.D.
1896	David Masson, LL.D.

THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY

IN considering the circumstances which led to the foundation of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1826, it is scarcely necessary to go elaborately into the history of Scottish art before the beginning of the nineteenth century. There are several authoritative works in which this history is fully set forth, and from which the student can obtain all needful information as to the progress and development of the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, and engraving in Scotland from the sixteenth century onwards. In these works will be found a detailed account of the movements, political and social, which seriously affected the condition of the arts north of the Tweed during the troubled period that ended about the middle of the eighteenth century, a period which, though not entirely barren of artistic achievement, was notable neither for the number nor the eminence of the artists whose lives fell within it; and anyone who desires to understand what were the slow and tentative beginnings of the Scottish School must turn to what are in the best sense records of the national art-history, *e.g.*, Allan Cunningham's "Lives of British Artists," Vol. V., Robert Brydall's "Art in Scotland: its Origin and Progress," and W. D. McKay's "Scottish School of Painting," recently published.

But to explain the way in which the creation of a Scottish Academy became not only expedient but actually a matter of vital importance it will suffice to make a commencement with the events of the art world during the first years of the nineteenth century. About 1750 there began an astonishing awakening in art matters in Scotland, an activity in the pursuit and patronage of the arts which was extraordinary both in actual accomplishment and in the promise it gave of even greater results in the near future. This activity increased year by year as the eighteenth century drew to its close, and early in the nineteenth there had come into existence a large and vigorous school of Scottish artists dominated by two men, Raeburn and Wilkie, who are ranked now among the world's masters. By the influence and example of Raeburn, especially, a serious purpose had been imparted to the practice of the arts in Scotland, great traditions were being established, and a body of sincere workers had grown up who were united in the desire to give the

worthiest possible expression of a dignified and noble æsthetic creed. Another influence which counted for much began to be active in 1798. In this year John Graham was appointed master of the academy which had been established in 1760 by the Honourable Board of Trustees for Manufactures in Scotland. Under the direction of Graham, an artist of ability, this academy became immediately of the greatest service to Scottish art. It was not the first institution of its kind in Scotland, for it had been preceded by the Academy of St. Luke at Edinburgh, which was organised by a group of artists and art-lovers in 1729, and lasted for a few years, and by the academy of the brothers Foulis at Glasgow, which was instituted on an ambitious scale in 1753 and came to an end in 1775. But the Trustees' Academy, under Graham, was certainly the first of these teaching places to affect in a marked manner the aims of the national school and to bring into existence any considerable group of distinguished artists. A number of men who subsequently became famous owed much of their success to Graham's enthusiasm and practical skill as a teacher—among them Wilkie, John Watson Gordon, William Allan, and John Burnet—and as he held his appointment for nineteen years he was able to make his influence felt strongly and permanently.

It will be as well to give at this stage some account of the character and functions of the Board of Trustees for Manufactures, because this official organisation has been throughout a long period extremely active directly and indirectly in Scottish art affairs. The trustees, twenty-one in number, were appointed in 1727 by letters patent, which laid upon them the duty of controlling and expending annually a sum of £2,000, provided for "encouraging and promoting the fisheries and such other manufactures and improvements in Scotland as may most conduce to the general good of the United Kingdom." According to a statement made in Knox's "View of the British Empire" in 1785 this fund was obtained in a rather odd way: "By the Treaty of Union it was stipulated that £398,085 should be paid to the Scots as an equivalent for the customs, taxes, and excises to be levied upon that kingdom in consequence of the English debt, which then amounted to £20,000,000, though estimated at £17,000,000. This equivalent, if it may be so called, was applied in the following manner:

"First, to pay off the capital of the Scottish India Company, which was to be abolished in favour of the English Company trading to the East Indies.

"Secondly, to indemnify for any losses they might sustain by reducing

the coin of Scotland to the standard and value of the coin of England; and, as generally reported, thirdly, in bribing a majority of the Scottish Parliament when matters came to the last push.

"Of the whole equivalent, therefore, only £40,000 was left for national purposes; and so lost to public spirit, and to all sense of honour, were the representatives of Scotland, three or four noblemen excepted, that this balance was suffered to lie useless in the English treasury till the year 1727, when the royal burghs began to awake out of their stupor, and to apply the interest of the £40,000 towards raising a little fund for improving the manufactures and fisheries of the country.

"An Act of Parliament now directed the application of the funds to the several purposes for which they were designed, and appointed Twenty-One Commissioners, who were intrusted with the management of the same, and other matters relating thereto."

This story is probably not quite accurate in its account of the circumstances which preceded the creation of the Board, for actually the money was not locked up in the English treasury and forgotten until 1727. By the Treaty of Union £2,000 a year was assigned for the encouragement of the manufacture of coarse wool in the shires which produced wool, and subsequently the use of this money was extended to the promotion of the fisheries and "other manufactures and improvements." In 1718 the annual amount was made payable for ever out of the customs and excise in Scotland; and in 1725 an Act was passed to provide that when the return from the tax on malt should exceed £20,000 a year the surplus should be added to the £2,000 and used for the same purposes. The appointment of the twenty-one trustees in 1727 was decided upon so that the administration of the fund should be properly supervised in the future, and so that the money should be applied in the manner prescribed by the letters patent. In 1809 the number was increased, for seven additional trustees were appointed to act as Commissioners of the Herring Fishery and undertook, in a more or less independent position, this part of the work for which the whole body was responsible, while the original twenty-one continued to carry on the remaining duties of the Board.

Not the least important of these duties was the encouragement of crafts and manufactures; and the Trustees, with the idea of making this encouragement as practical as possible, began by offering prizes for drawings and pattern designs which would be useful to manufacturers. Out of this grew the institution, in 1760, of what was actually the first school of design, maintained at the public expense,

to be established in the United Kingdom, a school open to students of both sexes who wished to obtain instruction in drawing and the other rudiments of artistic practice. The first master was Mr. Delacour, and to him and his successors during the thirty-eight years which elapsed before John Graham came on the scene, much credit is doubtless due for the manner in which the affairs of a useful institution were conducted. But it was Graham's energy that made the school a real art centre ; he did not hesitate to sacrifice his own interests as an artist for the sake of carrying on efficiently his duties as a teacher, and to give some of the best years of his life to educational work.

This school had undoubtedly much to do with that remarkable increase of activity in art matters which became so apparent during the first few years of the nineteenth century. The number of professional art workers grew rapidly, and the amount of attention they received proved that there was also growing up in Scotland a very definite appreciation of artistic effort. One of the first results of these good relations between the workers and the public was the creation of an association under the title of the Society of Incorporated Artists, which proposed to hold periodical exhibitions of pictures by the best of the Scottish painters. The inaugural exhibition was opened in 1808; it included a hundred and seventy-eight works, contributed by twenty-six artists, among whom were Patrick and Alexander Nasmyth, George Watson, and Thomson of Duddingston, and it appears to have made a considerable degree of success. These exhibitions were continued annually until 1813, when the society found itself in possession of accumulated funds to the amount of some £1,800, which represented the profits made on the series of shows. With curious shortsightedness a majority of the members passed a resolution that these savings should be divided among them, and, in spite of the opposition of the few men who could foresee what would be the future of an association which had made such an excellent beginning, this division was insisted upon. As a consequence, the society ceased to exist; and though certain artists organised three other annual exhibitions in the gallery of Raeburn's house, these also came to an end in 1816.

Concerning these savings of the Society of Incorporated Artists an interesting story is told by Lord Cockburn in his "Memorials." After stating that the earlier exhibitions were not financially successful, and that the income derived from payments for admission to the shows was insufficient to cover the expenditure, he says: "A humble citizen called Core, who kept a stoneware shop in Nicolson Street,

without communicating with anyone hastily built or hired—I rather think built—a place, afterwards called the Lyceum, behind the houses on the east side of Nicolson Street, and gave the use of it to the astonished artists." If this story is correct, it explains how the Society, having no rent to pay for its exhibition rooms, was able to put by so large a sum as £1,800 in five or six years; but it also makes the conduct of the greedy members who voted for the division of the fund, doubly inexcusable. It was obviously the duty of the Society to keep in hand sufficient of its profits to make it safe against the time when it would no longer have a gallery put at its disposal rent free. However, if wiser counsels had prevailed in the Society of Incorporated Artists, and if it had become, as it might well have, rich and influential, there would probably have been no Royal Scottish Academy; the disappearance of the earlier Association cleared the way for new movements which have left a definite mark on the history of art in Scotland.

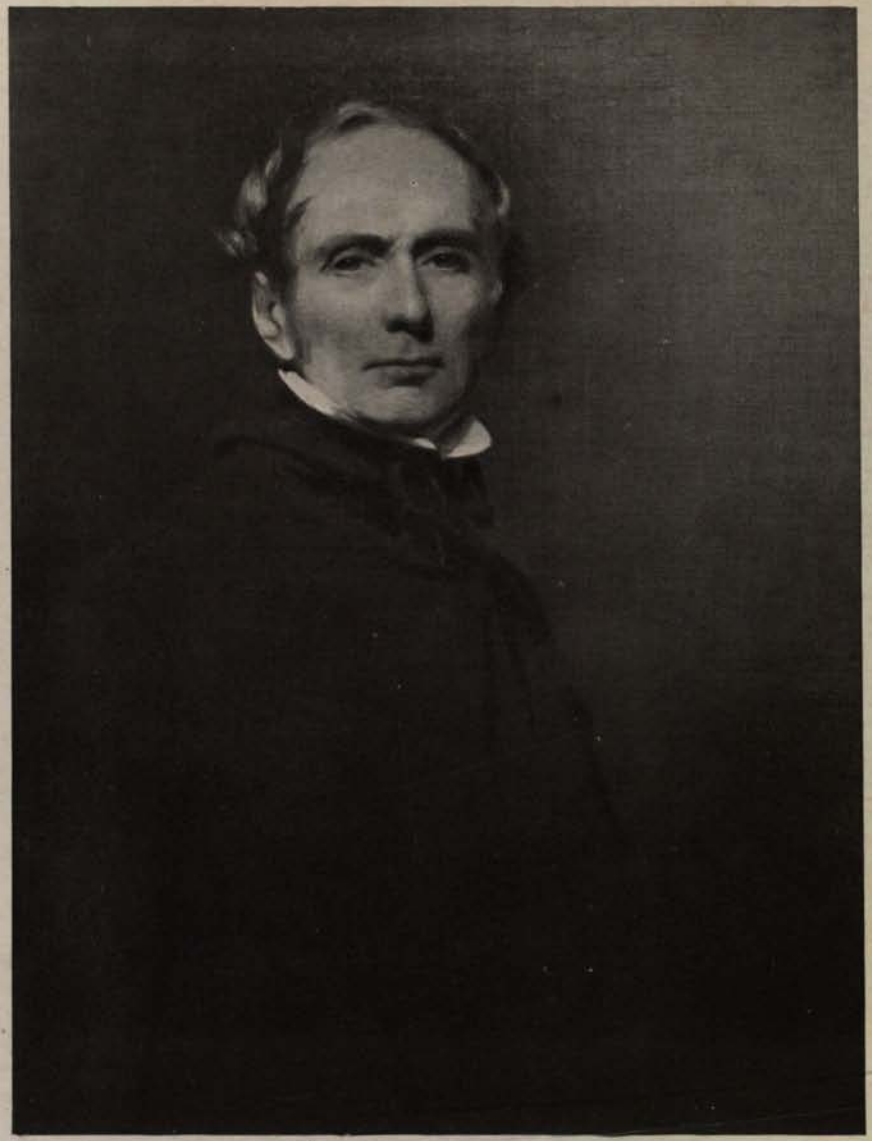
The Society, if it had done nothing else, had proved that there was a public prepared to support exhibitions of works of art; so it is not surprising to find that an effort was quickly made to satisfy the popular demand. In 1819 there was founded the "Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland," of which the object was to bring together annually collections of pictures of the old masters. The first exhibition, held in that year in Raeburn's Gallery, included ninety-two canvases by such painters as Titian, Velasquez, Rubens, and Van Dyck, with a few works by British masters. This "Institution" was not at all on the lines of its predecessor; it was controlled by twenty-four directors, noblemen and gentlemen, who became life-members by a payment of £50, and there was an express statement in its constitution that "no artist was capable of being elected on any committee, or of voting as a governor, while he continued a professional artist." It was intended, indeed, to exercise an influence against rather than for modern art, and to support ancient tradition rather than to encourage the activity of the living men. Its merits and defects are well explained in another quotation which may be made from Lord Cockburn's writing:—"It introduced itself to the public by the best exhibition of ancient pictures ever brought together in this country, all from the collections of its members and their friends. Begun under great names, it had one defect and one vice. It did little or nothing for art, except by such exhibitions, which could not last long, as the supply of pictures was soon exhausted. Its vice was a rooted jealousy of our living artists as a body by the few who led the Institution.

These persons were fond of art, but fonder of power, and tried indirectly to kill all living art and its professors that ventured to flourish except under their sunshine."

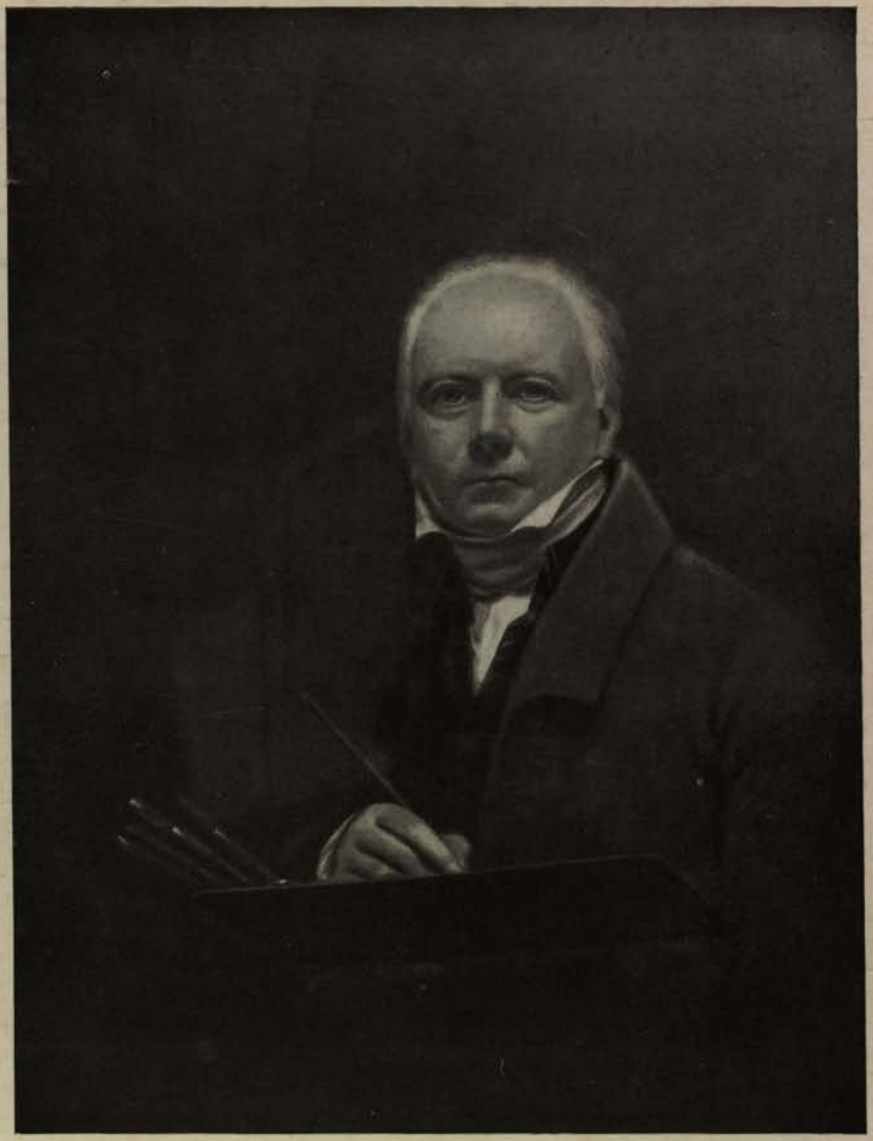
But though the Institution was started with the idea that it would only advocate the superior claims of the old masters, it soon discovered that its sole chance lay in recognising contemporary art. Its second exhibition was so nearly a failure that the need for a complete revision of its policy became immediately urgent. So the directors entered into negotiations with the artists and invited them to contribute to the next show, offering in return to set aside the profits to form a fund for the benefit of artists and their families. This offer was accepted, and the 1821 exhibition consisted of pictures and sculpture by living men, among whom were most of the leading Scottish artists. That this move was a wise one was proved by the large attendance of visitors to the gallery and by the excellent record of sales; and accordingly the exhibitions of the Institution were continued on these lines for some years longer.

As the Institution was now in great measure depending on living artists for its prosperity, it might fairly have been expected to introduce some modifications into that part of its constitution by which art workers were specifically excluded from any part in the management of its affairs. But though it made a few artists Honorary Members, and a few more Associate Members, it refused to give them any share even in the control of the exhibitions, and kept them absolutely under the dictation of the directors. The position of the artists was not only undignified and absurd, but it imposed also upon the men who were striving to advance the interests of their profession a very unjust and inconvenient disability. Nor was any disposition shown by the directors of the Institution to consider the legitimate claims of the contributors to the exhibitions; every suggestion on the part of the artists that they ought to have a say in matters with which they were immediately concerned was ignored or repudiated in a somewhat high-handed fashion, and every hint of compromise was strenuously resisted.

Naturally enough, this condition of affairs was quickly felt to be intolerable by the men upon whom the rules of the Institution pressed most hardly. Growing discontent led before long to active rebellion, and in 1826 steps to form a new association were taken by twenty-four artists who believed that their only hope for the future lay in cutting themselves adrift from the "noblemen and gentlemen" who sought to prescribe the manner in which the artistic affairs of the country should be carried on. Of these twenty-four several were associate-



SIR J. WATSON GORDON, R.A.
(PRESIDENT 1850-1864). BY HIMSELF.



GEORGE WATSON (PRESIDENT, 1826-1837).
BY HIMSELF.

members of the Institution, and so had personal experience of the abuses which they desired to see abolished; but the whole group was moved to action by a quite intelligible desire for independence and for the removal of restrictions which were both irritating and inexpedient.

This rebellion apparently caused some uneasiness to the Institution, for it took the trouble to insert in the catalogue of its 1826 exhibition a preface, which is worth quoting because it is in some sort both an apology and a declaration of the objects kept in view by the directors. "These objects," it runs, "embrace whatever may at any time appear calculated to promote the improvement of the fine arts, by exciting a more lively interest in their successful progress, by providing the means from which a more general diffusion of taste in matters of art may be expected to result, and by tending thus to increase the honour and the emoluments of our professional artists. The Institution being formed, not as a society of artists, but for their benefit, and for the encouragement of art generally, it is proposed to have periodical public exhibitions for the sale of the productions of British artists; to purchase the works of modern artists, which, it is hoped, may of themselves eventually form a most interesting exhibition; to excite emulation and industry among the younger artists by offering premiums for their competition, and, by facilitating their exertions, putting it in their power to visit London or other places affording particular means of improvement; to obtain, from time to time, for the study of the artists and the gratification of the public, exhibitions of some of the best works of the old masters that can be procured; to establish a library of engravings and books on art—an object which has already in part been attained, and which is recommended to the Institution both by the unquestionable utility of such a collection, and by its being one of too expensive a description to fall easily within the reach of purchase by private individuals; and, finally, to serve the means of affording relief to artists suffering under unavoidable reverse of circumstances, or to their families when deprived by their death of the benefit of their talent and exertions; and for which object also some provision has already been made."

Yet with all these excellent intentions, and despite all its strenuous professions, the Institution failed to secure the confidence of the very people whose interests, it wished to be understood, it had so seriously at heart. It was doing the presumably right thing in what was evidently the wrong way, as the artists, instead of being duly grateful to it for its efforts on their behalf, were actually planning an organised opposition. The initial step in this opposition was the

preparation of a document proposing the foundation of a Scottish Academy, and this document was taken round to various artists by William Nicholson, the portrait painter, that signatures might be obtained of sympathisers with the scheme. It was shortly afterwards printed and published with twenty-four names attached.

On May 27th, 1826, the first general meeting of "The Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture" took place, and at this meeting George Watson was elected President; William Nicholson, Secretary; Thomas Hamilton, Treasurer; and Thomas Hamilton, William Simson, James Stevenson, and Patrick Syme, Members of Council. Of the men who had promised to support the new association, thirteen were made Academicians, nine Associates, and two Associate Engravers. But, unfortunately, things were not destined to go smoothly with the Academy at the beginning. Shortly after the general meeting, at which the preliminary arrangements seemed to have been so satisfactorily settled, nine of the members resigned, apparently in alarm at the magnitude of the undertaking to which they had committed themselves. This secession led to the calling of another general meeting—on December 26th, 1826—to discuss the position and to decide whether or not the attempt to carry on the Academy should be abandoned. The meeting, with some courage, voted in favour of going on with the scheme, and appointed William Nicholson a Member of Council in the place of William Simson, who was one of the nine seceders. Arrangements were made for opening the inaugural exhibition early in 1827, a gallery was taken in Waterloo Place, and invitations were sent round to artists not only in Scotland, but in London as well, to assist the new Academy by contributions of suitable works. Under the circumstances the small group of fifteen artists showed remarkable resolution in refusing to be daunted by the difficulties which had gathered round them, but it is generally admitted that they were inspired to adopt this bold policy by the enthusiasm and energy of William Nicholson and Thomas Hamilton, the real founders and promoters of the Association.

The Academy made its first appeal to the public on February 1st, 1827, with an exhibition that included two hundred and eighty-two works sent in by sixty-seven contributors. In the catalogue appeared a rejoinder to the previous manifesto of the Institution: "It may no doubt be said that an Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts already exists in Edinburgh; but while the intentions of its promoters are entitled to every praise, it can only be regarded in the light of an auxiliary, and ought not to supersede or repress the

A. L. S.—SIR ROBERT PEEL.

Whitehall

Rev. 9. 1841

Sir

Although Your Letter bears date the 6th September - it was not as You are probably aware placed in my hands by Sir Thomas Lawrence - until a few days since

Feeling a very warm interest in the advancement of the Fine Arts in Scotland

and cordially approving of the
Institution which it is proposed to
establish at Edinburgh under His
Majesty's sanction - I beg to
assure You that I have lost no time
in making those References to
the Kings Law Officers which precede
the final conformation by the King

J

a Charter of Incorporation.

The Scottish Royal Academy

both have my warmest wishes

for its Prosperity.

I have the Honour to be

Sir

Your Obedient & faithful Servant

Robert Peel

George Watson Esq

combined efforts of the artists themselves. The Royal Institution, from its very nature, never can supply the place of an Academy composed of professional artists, and entirely under their own management and control. By confining itself, however, to its original and legitimate objects, it may undoubtedly render very essential services to the fine arts, whilst it may still leave an ample field beyond the sphere of its operations which professional men alone can occupy with advantage. The members declare they are actuated by no feeling of hostility to any existing institution, and consider that the objects in view, in which their own interests are so deeply concerned, will be best attained by their own exertions." The reference in this rejoinder to "The Royal Institution" marks a point which had just been scored by the Institution against its young rival; the Academy had made application to the Home Secretary for a charter of incorporation, but though he expressed himself strongly in favour of this being granted, and though the application was strongly endorsed by Sir Thomas Lawrence, the charter was refused after the matter had been under discussion for two years. But the distinction was conferred upon the Institution, apparently at the first time of asking.

This addition to its importance did not, however, make the directors of the Royal Institution any less anxious to spoil the chances of the Academy. Their exhibition also opened on February 1st, 1827, and to announce it they issued an advertisement to this effect: "The Directors of the Royal Institution have observed in the *Scotsman*, of 3rd January current, a paragraph under the title of 'Associated Artists,' stating, 'It will be observed that the Associated Artists are to have an exhibition of their own early in February, distinct from that of the Royal Institution.' As this might lead to the supposition that the exhibition of the works of modern artists, to be opened at the Institution Rooms on the Earthen Mound, next month, was not to be supported by the Associated Artists of the Institution, the Directors think it right to mention that at a late meeting of these gentlemen they were informed by the following eminent artists, namely, Messrs. William Allan, A. Nasmyth, J. W. Thomson, J. Watson Gordon, H. W. Williams, J. F. Williams, and W. Simson, being the whole Associated Artists present, that it was their intention to send their works to the exhibition in the Rooms of the Institution, and to make the utmost exertions to give it every support in their power. The Directors may add to the above list the names of Mr. Playfair and Mr. Andrew Wilson, the latter of whom, when leaving the country for Italy, promised to contribute to the approaching

Exhibition. Messrs. George Watson, Samuel Josephs, and William Nicholson, the remaining Associated Artists, did not attend the above meeting, and therefore the Directors had no means of learning their views on the subject."

That the directors were not in any doubt about the views of these three absentees was proved by a little incident which occurred at this time. They gave commissions for paintings—presumably as a kind of bonus for good behaviour—to each of the Associated Artists who had promised "to make the utmost exertions to give every support in their power" to the exhibition of the Royal Institution, but allowed no part to Messrs. George Watson, Samuel Josephs, and William Nicholson, in this distribution of favours. The members of the Academy, however, were neither disturbed by the advertisements nor weakened in their allegiance by the thought of lost commissions. They made a modest success with their first exhibition, which brought them a little over £300, and at which sales to the amount of about £500 were effected; and they set to work in quiet confidence to prepare for their next show. This, thanks to better organisation, was a much greater success, for it included not only works by many notable Scottish artists but also others contributed by men living in England; and it was followed, in 1829, by an exhibition which secured such unqualified popularity that it gave the Academy an absolute victory over the Royal Institution. Indeed, the Institution, finding its galleries deserted, while those of its rival were crowded, acknowledged its defeat readily enough, and then and there gave up its annual shows of modern work. It made one effort, it is true, to retain its hold upon the Scottish artists by addressing to the Secretary of the Academy in July, 1829, a letter requesting him "to take the trouble of ascertaining from the members of the Scottish Academy of Painting whether they (the Directors) may hope to be favoured with works of any of its members at the exhibition in February next, and with the names of such as may intend to do so," to which a reply was returned that the members of the Academy were "decidedly of opinion that they could not support the ensuing exhibition at the Royal Institution, without materially injuring the establishment with which they are more immediately connected, and which it is their first duty to uphold." In this reply, however, the suggestion was made that a summer exhibition of modern works, to which the Academy would contribute, might be arranged by the Institution, and an exhibition of this kind was opened in May, 1830. But the experiment was a failure, and it was not repeated.

There were two reasons for this change in the attitude of the Royal Institution towards the Academy. The first was the brilliant success of the 1829 exhibition, to which many notable artists had contributed, and in which were hung Lord Hopetoun's *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Rubens, and Etty's great picture of *Judith and Holofernes*. This last canvas, by a master-stroke of policy, had been bought by the Academy, and though this purchase was at the moment freely condemned as a piece of rash extravagance, it had, by the sensation it created, an unquestionably beneficial effect upon the fortunes of the young association, which was prepared to show in so practical a fashion that it certainly did not lack the courage of its opinions. The very audacity of such a move was bound to excite the interest of the public, and the result decidedly justified the confidence of the members in the expediency of the purchase.

Indeed, about all the arrangements for this exhibition there was an atmosphere of confidence which testifies to the growing sense of security in the Academy. There is evidence of a healthy spirit in the preface to the catalogue: "The Council have much satisfaction in acknowledging the warm support which the Academy has received from Scottish artists resident in London, affording, as it does, a pleasing proof of their undiminished attachment to their early friends, and of a truly patriotic interest in the progress of art in their native land. The Council also acknowledge with peculiar pleasure their debt of gratitude to many English artists of the highest distinction, whose contributions they prize the more highly, as coming from those who are the most competent judges of the best means of advancing art, and as conveying an unequivocal testimony to their approbation of the principles on which the Scottish Academy is founded. The Council are not ignorant of the means which have been employed to obstruct the progress of the Scottish Academy. It is not, however, the intention of the Council, on the present occasion, to allude to these any further, than merely to express a conviction that they must ultimately prove abortive, and only serve as a useful lesson to those who may be more anxious for the possession than the liberal exercise of patronage. Any attempt to reduce the artists of Scotland to a state of dependence cannot fail, sooner or later, to lead to reaction; for it is not to be supposed that men of intelligence and liberal pursuits should long continue to submit to unlimited control, or surrender what they must prize so highly—the dignity and independence of their profession."

A very practical demonstration of the truth of this contention, that "men of intelligence and liberal pursuits" would not long continue

to submit to "unlimited control," provided the second reason for the surrender of the Royal Institution. The artists who had lacked the courage to throw in their lot with the Academy three years before had at last come to the conclusion that they could no longer tolerate the control of the directors of the Institution. They had decided at last to assert their independence, and to do without the patronage which imposed so severe a strain on their self-respect. The Academy, knowing, no doubt, of this intention, and feeling that the time had come when the number of its own members might with advantage be increased, addressed a circular on February 27th, 1829, to the Associates of the Royal Institution, inviting them to fill the available vacancies. This offer, however, none of these Associates was willing to accept—possibly because they had some feeling of jealousy towards an association which had already attained so large a measure of success without their assistance. But though they declined then to join the Academy they severed their connection with the Royal Institution, and, having allied themselves with some other Edinburgh artists, they began to plan the formation of another independent society. A group of twenty-four men was brought together; they met and discussed a scheme of organisation, but they were unable to agree upon any satisfactory course of procedure; and finally, abandoning their idea of a separate society, they decided on an effort to secure admission to the Academy.

To this end they enlisted the services of Mr. Henry Cockburn—afterwards Lord Cockburn—to act as their intermediary in the negotiations which they proposed to open. He wrote, on June 6th, 1829, a lengthy letter, addressed to the President of the Academy, in which he gave a list of the artists for whom he was acting—W. Allan, W. J. Thomson, J. W. Gordon, W. Playfair, John Graham, Colvin Smith, W. Burn, R. S. Lauder, W. Bonar, James Stewart, E. Crawford, J. F. Williams, J. Steell, S. Mackenzie, William Simson, D. Scott, D. O. Hill, George Simson, Robert Gibb, F. Grant, Z. Bell, T. Duncan, D. Macnee, and J. Giles—and pleaded the cause of his clients with much eloquence. After stating the wish of these artists to be received into the Academy, and making some suggestions as to the manner in which this reception might be arranged, he concludes with these words: "Whatever the result may be, I cannot close this communication without expressing my most earnest hope that it may prove successful; in which hope I am quite confident that I am joined by almost the whole intelligence of this place. I anticipate everything conducive to the Arts and honour-

able to its professors from the union of our Edinburgh artists—nothing from their disunion but painful jealousies, useless expense, and the want of that professional dignity and force which can only arise from fixing the public admiration on one undivided association of artists, living in harmony with each other, and raising the character of their country by their genius. I trust therefore that the Academy will receive this proposal in the spirit in which it is made. It is a spirit of reasonableness, liberality, and friendship."

Although this application was, in a sense, a response to and an acceptance of the invitation addressed earlier in the year to the Associates of the Royal Institution, some new conditions were created by it which put the Academy in a not inconsiderable difficulty. To have received the twelve men who had just severed their connection with the Institution would have been comparatively a simple matter, but to these another twelve had been added, and the whole twenty-four were now asking for admission. The members of the Academy, who at the moment were only fifteen in number, felt that by such an accession to their ranks they would be handing the concern, which they had built up in the face of so much opposition, over absolutely to the new-comers, and that they themselves would lose the advantages they had gained by their unassisted exertions. So they embodied their view of the case in a document which was submitted to Mr. Hope, the Solicitor-General for Scotland, with a request that he would act on behalf of the Academy—a request to which he returned a willing consent.

The whole matter was then left in the hands of Mr. Hope and Mr. Cockburn, who, as arbitrators, met and discussed the various points at issue, and finally delivered to a general assembly of the Academy on July 10th, 1829, an award in which their decision, and the reasons for it, were plainly set forth. The twenty-four outside applicants were to be admitted, the then Associates of the Academy were to be advanced to full membership, the existing property of the association, and all additions to be made to it in the future, were to remain "necessarily dedicated and set apart for the purposes of the Academy," and other safeguards were provided against any weakening of the concern by its sudden expansion. The arbitrators also made clear what were the principles on which their award was based by the declaration that "we consider a general and complete union of the artists to be an object of such vast importance that no temporary difficulties ought to be allowed to interfere with its attainment. And we are convinced that the establishment of a second institution, on the principle of the Academy, would entirely

frustrate the objects of both : would tend to create a feeling of distrust in the public mind as to the permanence of either, and of disinclination towards such rival and jarring establishments, and of disapprobation of the spirit of dissension which such a result would seem to evince, to a degree in no respect founded on fact, and from which spirit, therefore, no obstacles to a general union in reality exist. In order that such general union may be beneficial, it must be founded on principles which may secure permanence; and we are intimately persuaded that the most generous, cordial, and solid principle of union is that which will tend most to elevate the character of the institution—to interest its members in its prosperity—to engage the warm and undivided support of the public, and to secure the continuance of that support on the one hand, and of the interest of the members on the other, by the great scale on which its exhibitions may be conducted, the extensive means of study which it will afford, the cheering encouragement and reward of genius which it will hold forth, and by the enlightened public spirit and independent manner in which the managers of such a national establishment will be enabled to conduct, and must conduct, its management; on no other principle can any institution be formed really deserving the name of a National Academy, fitted to sustain the character and advance the interests of the Fine Arts in Scotland."

This lengthy statement of conviction certainly shows that Mr. Hope and Mr. Cockburn had looked from all points of view at the matters submitted to them, and that in arriving at their decision they had been actuated by a desire to save the Academy in the future from outside competition which might tend to weaken its authority and diminish its hold upon the public. They saw, too, the solid commercial advantage which would accrue to a body which could claim to include practically all the artists who at that time held places of real distinction in the Scottish School. As events shortly afterwards proved, the enlargement of the scope of the Academy, though, at the moment, productive of certain inconveniences, gave it a degree of influence which it could scarcely have expected to acquire if it had continued with a small membership and faced by the opposition of a number of able men who had been excluded from its ranks.

The chief difficulty which had been created by the acceptance of the award was the sudden raising of the number of the Academicians from fifteen to forty-two, a total which was recognised, and admitted by the arbitrators, as being excessive. It was felt that if this number was maintained there would be some danger that the Academy would be accused of not seeking to establish a sufficiently

A. L. S.—SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A.

7 Terrace
Kensington 12 Decemr 1831

My Dear Sir

As you had done me the favor upon former occasions to request that I would send some pictures for the Exhibition of the artists of the Scottish Academy, I am happy to be this year able to say that I have been favored with the promise of the loan of a picture for that purpose— May I therefore request you will be so kind as to inform me when your Exhibition is to take place, and when it will be necessary to send the pictures; Mr Lizzy has informed me that it will not take place so early as usual—

I take to hear a good account of your health and of your labours— with best regards to Mrs Miss Watson and to your family I have the honor to be

My Dear Sir
Your very faithful Servt
David Wilkie

George Watson Esqre
R A

high standard of merit, and of being willing to accept as members artists of insufficient distinction. Against this danger, however, provision was made in the award by the proposition "that one Academician shall be elected, on the principles and according to the rules of the Academy, for every three vacancies which shall occur until the number shall be reduced to thirty, after which it may be still further reduced by the then existing thirty members, if they shall think this further reduction proper;" and it was also recommended that the number of Associates should be fixed at fifteen. The eventual decision was to limit the Academicians to thirty, with twenty Associates.

At the annual meeting for the election of office-bearers, on November 11th, 1829—the first general assembly after the increase of membership—certain incidents occurred which seemed to suggest that the new-comers were inclined to take some advantage of their superiority of numbers over the original members of the Academy. One was the substitution of J. W. Gordon for Thomas Hamilton in the office of Treasurer, a change which, at the moment, aroused some feeling, because it was opposed to an express recommendation of the arbitrators, set forth in the following words in the award: "We are of opinion, and propose that the number, duties, and authority of the office-bearers of the Academy shall continue as at present; and we earnestly, and strongly, and respectfully recommend to the general body of the Academy to continue in office the intelligent, active, and public-spirited gentlemen now holding these situations, by whose exertions we consider that the progress of the Fine Arts has been greatly promoted, and whose fitness for these important situations has been decidedly proved by the eminent success with which their exertions have been attended. We press this point as of great importance to the welfare of the Institution, and we refrain from making it a stipulation not from underrating its importance, but because we feel assured that the gentlemen to whom our award is addressed will feel it to be more grateful to their feelings to have the opportunity of marking their sense of the services and claims of the gentlemen referred to in all matters connected with the interests and prosperity of the Scottish Academy." But, despite this strong expression of opinion, Hamilton was ousted from his post for no other reason apparently than that the painters, through professional jealousy, objected to being controlled by an architect.

Another incident was the moving of a resolution by W. Playfair to alter the rule under which the Treasurer was *ex officio* a member of the Council. This was opposed by Hamilton as being contrary

to the existing law "that the Council shall frame all new laws, but they shall have no force until ratified by consent of the general assembly"; and though at this meeting Playfair's motion was carried by a considerable majority, at a special general meeting, held in March of the following year, Hamilton's objection was sustained and the resolution cancelled. These differences of opinion were, perhaps, inevitable at first, until the opinions of the new men could be brought more or less into agreement with those of the earlier members who had already established some sort of tradition within the Academy.

It was probably in recognition of the need for mutual toleration, and for the maintaining of a sense of community of interests among the members, that the following passage, at once a warning and an appeal, was inserted in the 1829 Report: "The Council have now to advert to the important change which has taken place in the situation and prospects of the Scottish Academy. They hail with sincere pleasure and with the most favourable anticipations the union which has been effected between the professional men of this city, a union which they trust is destined to mark a most important era in the history of Scottish art, and to place its professors in that state of independence in which alone anything great or pre-eminent is to be achieved.

"The Council, however, cannot disguise from themselves, nor will they conceal it from this Meeting, that the important benefits to which they have alluded can only be attained by unanimity and cordiality, by merging all secondary considerations in a regard to the great objects of their association, by keeping steadily in view that the fate of the arts in their native country is committed to their hands, and that they must give an account of their stewardship at the bar of an enlightened public.

"Let the members of the Scottish Academy then prove themselves worthy of the high trust which they have assumed, let them banish every selfish and personal consideration, and let them strive to transmit to posterity, on a rock of adamant, the fabric which it has cost much time, much pains, and much labour to rear." These were excellent sentiments, and if all the members had been equally anxious to promote "unanimity and cordiality" in their conduct of the affairs of the Academy, its subsequent history would have been peaceful enough.

But almost immediately a somewhat serious dispute between the Council and certain of the members arose over the proposal to purchase two more pictures by Etty. An arrangement had been made

to hold an exhibition in December, 1831, of his "Judith" series, which already belonged to the Academy, and to add to the attractiveness of this exhibition two large pictures by him—*Benaiah* and *The Combat—Woman Pleading for the Vanquished*—and three smaller ones, were borrowed. After the opening of the exhibition, in which were included, in addition to these canvases by Etty, the diploma works of the Academicians, a suggestion was made by Mr. Hamilton that the two large pictures should be bought by the Academy. In this suggestion he was supported by two other members of the Council, Messrs. Macleay and Harvey, the matter was discussed at meetings of the Council on December 12th and 13th, and at a third meeting on December 15th it was unanimously decided that the purchase should be made on terms which had previously been settled with Etty.

But when this decision became known to the other members of the Academy a considerable section of them started a bitter and vehement agitation against the action of the Council. The assistance of lawyers was invoked to find some means by which the purchase could be repudiated, and the financial responsibility for it could be thrown upon the men who had promoted the scheme; a letter was even written to the owner of one of the pictures—who had agreed to sell it to the Academy—urging him to interfere. The Council, however, stood firmly by its decision, and responded to the clamour by ordering the Treasurer to make an immediate payment on account. The Treasurer, Watson Gordon, who was among the malcontents, thereupon resigned both his post and his membership of the Academy—but it may be noted here that a few years later he rejoined the body. J. F. Williams was appointed Treasurer in his place; and in due course the purchase of the pictures was completed.

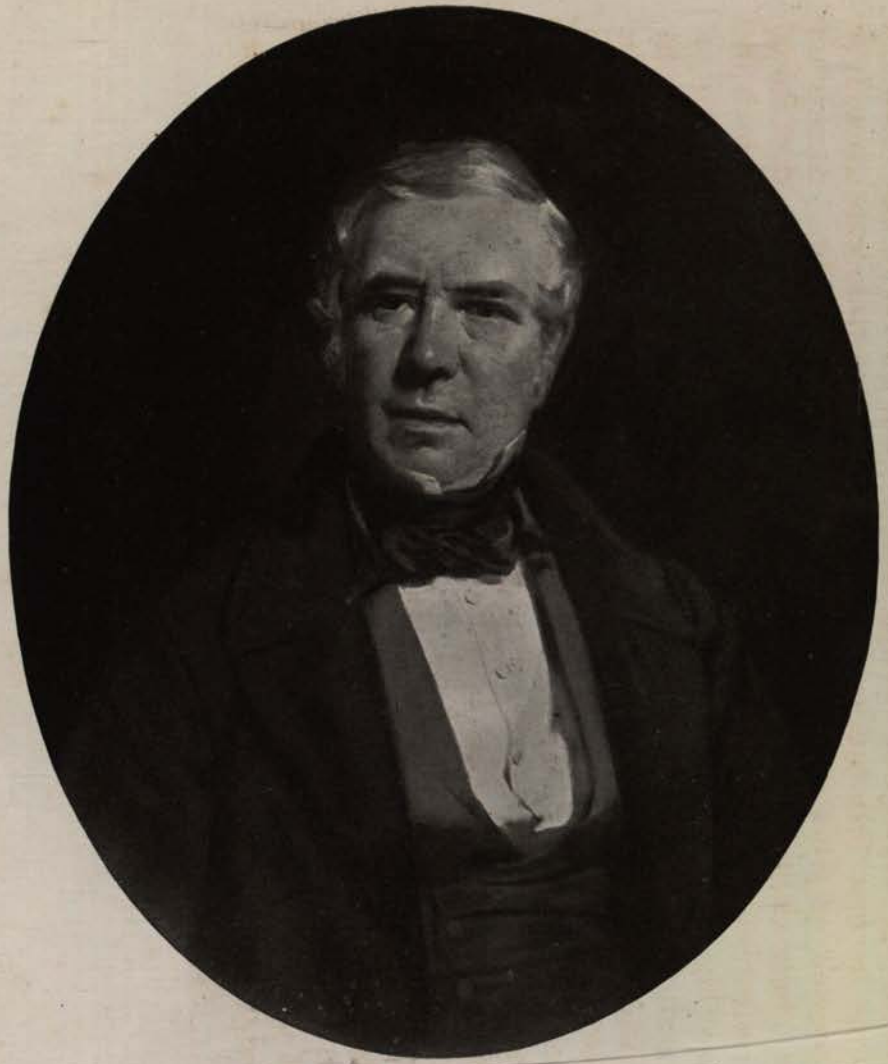
Although after a while the storm died down and many of the men who protested most loudly came over to the side of the Council, the episode left its mark upon the constitution of the Academy. A new law was passed to bring such matters in the future more directly under the control of the whole body of members :—"The Council shall not have power to purchase either works of art of any description whatever, or heritable property, without obtaining the previous consent of a general meeting, specially called by billets, intimating the purpose of the meeting, and put into the post-office, or delivered, ten days at least prior to such meeting." Some such safeguard against any misuse of the powers possessed by the Council was, no doubt, desirable, for this agitation had proved that the officials of the Academy were able to initiate and carry through schemes which

might quite possibly be opposed to the wishes of the rest of the members. But that the men who advocated the purchase of Etty's pictures were acting with intelligence and foresight, and were amply justified in carrying out their intention in defiance of all the efforts made against them, can scarcely be disputed. They acquired the two paintings on particularly favourable terms, they became possessed of remarkable works of art which within very few years increased enormously in value, and they added to the prestige of the Academy by showing that it was prepared to offer the most practical kind of support to an artist of great ability who had hitherto received far less than his due measure of recognition. How keenly Etty appreciated the compliment paid him by the Council can be seen in his letters at the time ; in one of them he wrote, in December, 1832 :—

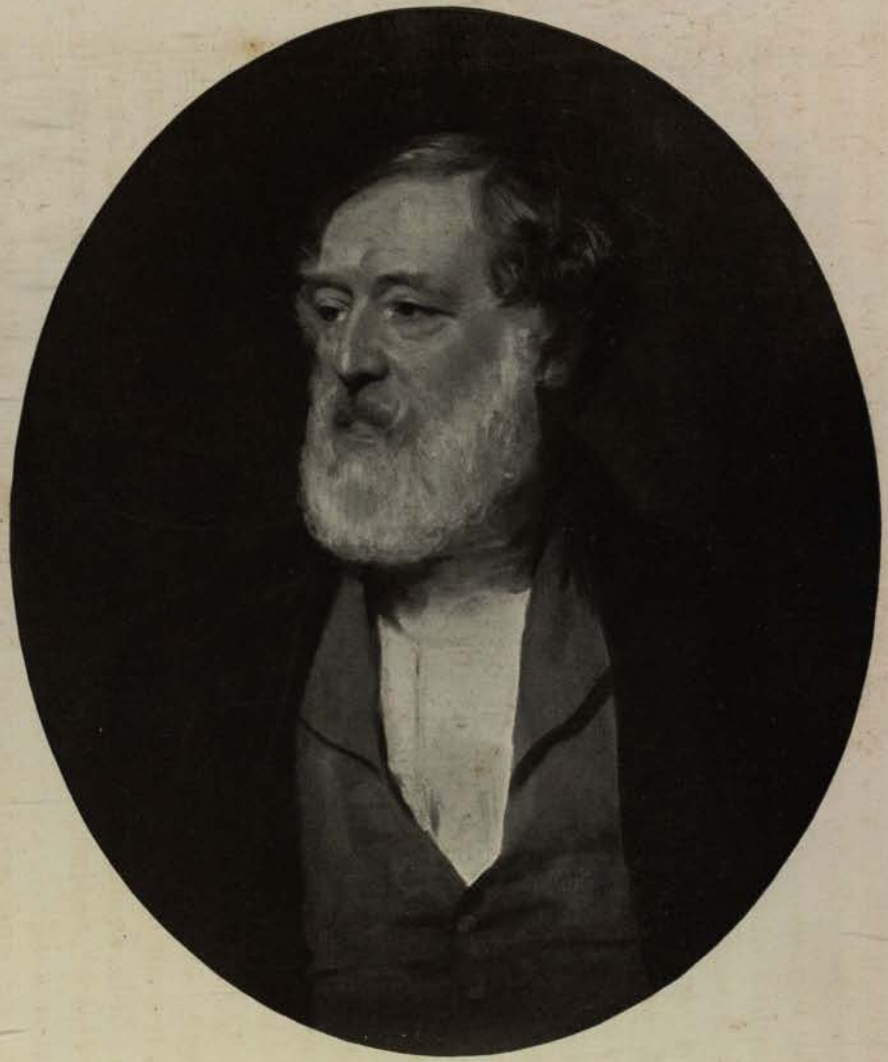
"I cannot let this opportunity pass of expressing the deep sense I feel of the honour and obligation which the Scottish Academy has conferred upon me—a sentiment which, I beg to assure you, sinks the deeper into my heart when I reflect that I see around me, and even in their own body, a number of artists equally, or perhaps more, deserving of the high distinction they have so generously bestowed on me. It is, however, my hope and prayer that conduct so noble, so disinterested, so truly in the spirit of an enlightening and liberal profession, will not, as indeed it ought not, to be without its just reward."

At the end of 1834 the Academy found itself obliged, by the impending expiration of the lease of the rooms it had occupied since its first Exhibition, to consider whether this lease should be renewed or whether fresh quarters should be sought. As a result of these deliberations, negotiations were opened with the Royal Institution for the use of its galleries and of a room in which the meetings of the Academy could be held. In these negotiations, Lord Cockburn took an active part and gave great assistance by putting the case of the artists before the Board of Trustees and the directors of the Royal Institution. Finally, after the matter had been discussed for some months, it was agreed that the Academy should have the use of the Institution rooms for three months annually at a rental of a hundred guineas, and this agreement was maintained for twenty years.

In 1837 George Watson, who had been President of the Academy from its foundation, died, and was succeeded by William Allan. One of the first events during his tenure of office was the preparation of a memorial to the Lords of the Treasury giving an account of the doings of the Academy during the eleven years of its existence,



DAVID ROBERTS, R.A., H.R.S.A.
BY SIR J. WATSON GORDON, P.R S.A., R.A.



J. F. LEWIS, R.A., H.R.S.A.
BY SIR J. WATSON GORDON, P.R.S.A., R.A.

and asking for a charter and a grant of not less than £300 a year. This memorial was revised by Lord Cockburn, who received, shortly after it was forwarded to London, a letter from Mr. Stewart, one of the Lords of the Treasury, in which he undertook to do his utmost to obtain for the Academy the privileges asked for. But later, in March, 1838, Mr. Stewart wrote officially, explaining that there were difficulties which would probably prevent the money grant being made, despite the sympathy felt by him and other members of the Government for the Academy.

On this ensued some further correspondence and much discussion with Lord Cockburn, who, having ascertained that an application for a charter necessitated a formal petition to the Queen and the presentation of a draft copy of the charter proposed, wrote to the Secretary on April 21, 1838, and gave the following advice :—"Now I think you should this year give up the grant and get the charter. For which purpose you should make Mr. Elder prepare a charter and petition. I shall be in Edinburgh in about a fortnight, and we can then revise and adjust the terms of both before finally transmitting them. The charter should contain all your rules and regulations, either as they are or as they are wished to be; after the charter is granted by the Crown it will not be altered—so take care of your rules, for they will operate for ever; and the irreversibility of them is the very circumstance that is valuable, because it excludes all future wrangling and discussion. The nearer you are to London rules the better." Accordingly the Council set to work on the petition and charter, and after their drafts had been submitted to Lord Cockburn, and remodelled as he suggested, they were forwarded to the Under Secretary of State; and on his recommendation the charter of incorporation was signed on August 13, 1838.

By this charter the Academy was raised to the rank of a Royal Society under the title of "The Royal Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture," and was required "thenceforth to consist of artists by profession, of fair moral character, high reputation in their several professions, settled and resident in Scotland at the dates of their respective elections, and not to be members of any other society of artists in Edinburgh." It was enjoined to hold an annual exhibition of paintings, sculpture, and designs by artists of distinguished merit; to appoint, as soon as its funds would permit, professors of painting, sculpture, architecture, perspective, and anatomy; and to organise schools in which students could work from the antique and from living models. All this

involved a considerable addition to the responsibilities of the Academy, and laid upon it, besides, no small financial obligations, for, as no money grant was made to it by the Government, the whole expenses of the Society had to be defrayed out of the proceeds of the annual exhibitions. Fortunately, the income from this source increased steadily, and enabled the Academy to carry on its work with all credit.

The first chapter of the history of the Society may fairly be said to have ended with this official acknowledgment of its importance and of its right to serious consideration—a chapter in which are recorded many struggles and adventures and much bold striving against adverse influences. In spite of the many disappointments with which it had to put up at the outset, and in the face of opposition of a very bitter kind, the Academy had in some thirteen years driven its rivals from the field, and had acquired a completely authoritative position as the chief guardian of Scottish art. It had proved that the artists of Scotland knew very well how to manage their own affairs without any interference from "those who may be more anxious for the possession than the liberal exercise of patronage," and it had never wavered in its desire—expressed in the preface to the catalogue of its third Exhibition—to promote the dignity and independence of the profession to which its members belonged. For the next few years it progressed peacefully enough; it was on good terms with the Royal Institution, which had in 1839 extended the gallery space originally allotted for the annual exhibitions; and the episodes which broke the even tenour of its career were mostly agreeable ones, like the knighting of the President, William Allan, on his appointment, in succession to Wilkie, as Queen's Limner for Scotland, in 1842.

But in 1844 an incident occurred which, though it was apparently of very small importance, had after effects of a serious nature, and led indirectly to some notable developments in the policy of the Academy. When the 1844 exhibition was being hung, a picture by a young artist, the son of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, the Secretary to the Board of Trustees, was placed in a position of some prominence, but before the exhibition opened was removed by the Council to another part of the room in response to a protest from sixteen members of the Academy, who considered that the canvas was unsuited for the place at first given to it. This change—one that is often made in the hanging of an exhibition—was noted, and reported to the artist, by a servant of the Board who had come into the room while the pictures were being arranged; and on the

strength of this report the artist's father wrote to the Secretary of the Academy a letter from which the following quotation can be made as particularly significant of the intolerance of the official attitude :—"I understand that the picture of a young artist, sent for the present exhibition, was, on Saturday the 3rd instant, placed by the Committee for hanging the pictures in a fair position on the wall of the Large Room ;—that it was subjected to the consideration of the Council held on that day, which allowed it to retain the place assigned to it ;—that it was seen there, and left there by the Council at their meetings on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following ;—but that on Thursday, in consequence of the application of certain individuals of the Academy, another meeting of the Council was specially called for reconsidering the matter, at which the Council undid what it had before settled—removed the picture from the position where the Hanging Committee had placed it, and hung it up in one of the worst places, if not the very worst, in the rooms. It is evident that no public confidence can be placed in future in a Council which can allow, not only the judgment of its Hanging Committee, but its own determinations corroborative thereof, and these so long confirmed, to be swayed and overturned by every unworthy intrigue that may be originated by selfish individuals in the body which it ought to govern. If so great a piece of injustice was to be committed against anyone, perhaps it was as well that it should have been done against my son, as against anyone more humbly connected ; and certainly the circumstance that his picture should have been such as to have excited any such jealous intrigue against it ought to be extremely flattering to so young an artist—for had no such jealousy existed, there could have been little occasion for removing the picture."

The Academy, naturally enough, resenting such a foolish and offensive attempt to dictate to it as to the manner in which it should manage its private concerns, passed a series of resolutions at a meeting held a few days later, and forwarded them, duly signed by the President, to Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. Among other matters embodied in these resolutions it was stated that "by the laws of this Academy, no person shall be admitted into the rooms before the exhibition opens ; but the Council have been informed that Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, of his own accord, entered the rooms several days before they were open to the public.

"That shortly after Mr. Dick Lauder's picture was hung up, a member of Council stated to one of the committee that he considered the arrangement objectionable on account of the nature of the

colouring throughout the picture, which seriously injured the effect of the exhibition at that place; and the Council have also been informed by the member in question, that while making this observation, he did not know who the artist was, or even that any son of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder was an artist, and that he had not, at that early period of the arrangement, formed any opinion of the merits of the picture itself.

"That at the meeting of the Council on the 7th instant, an objection was stated to the position of the said picture, on the ground of its discordance with the surrounding pictures; but it being suggested that Sir Thomas Dick Lauder had been in the rooms, and would probably feel disappointed were the picture removed to a less objectionable place, the Council, while they felt dissatisfied both with the position of the picture and with Sir Thomas having entered the rooms, resolved notwithstanding, after some discussion, to allow the picture to continue; and in thus waiving, to some extent, their own judgment in this matter, the Council were actuated by a regard to the feelings of Sir Thomas and his son."

The resolutions then proceed to explain how on the day that the rooms were opened to the members of the Academy, "a strong and universal feeling of disapprobation was expressed as to the position of the picture in question," and how the members present, sixteen in number, unanimously requested the Council to revise the decision previously arrived at; and the Council's appreciation of the difficulties which might probably arise out of the incident is set forth in these words:—"That in Sir Thomas's letter to the Secretary he asserts that no public confidence can in future be placed in the Council of the Academy; that the Council has allowed its judgment to be swayed by an unworthy intrigue originated by selfish individuals within the Academy; that the Council have committed a great injustice—an injustice of a most offensive nature; and that the intrigue alluded to was prompted by jealousy of the merit of his son's picture; and these heavy charges are made in a letter from a gentleman holding the official situation of Secretary to the Honourable Board of Trustees for Manufactures, etc., a body of great public importance and influence, and which possesses great power, either to advance or to injure the interests of the Royal Scottish Academy."

In his answer to this detailed explanation of the views of the Council Sir Thomas, without specifically retracting his accusations, made a kind of half-hearted apology for them, and gave an assurance

Thursday Mch/54

Gentlemen

The presence of purchasers of Art at the Academys private view tomorrow when Electro-mural exhibitors are excluded, was considered by you as fair & valid reason for not inviting Gentlemen having that claim alone. And you excluded them that actual not members of the Royal Scottish Academy might be enabled - in the absence of invitations to Members - to avail of the Academys notice. I as a member of Council beg to remind you I do not see how all forgotten - That the Committee of the two Associations are invited, & we will undoubtedly lay ourselves open to much real misinterpretation & misconception if we do not do what I find a large proportion of the Academicians thought desirable viz

issue tickets to a dozen of the most
wealthy artists of the day - not connected
with the academy - all of whom may
be chosen by ballot.

I would not return to the abandoned
subject question, but I respectfully, but a
very great number of our members
strongly recommend the Council to
reconsider their vote of today

I have the honour to be
Your very Obedt Servt
William Douglas

The President
& Council of the Royal Scottish

that "nothing which has occurred, or which may occur between the Royal Scottish Academy and me as a private individual, can affect that zeal which, as Secretary of the Board of Manufactures, I have always manifested to promote the interests of an institution having objects so deserving of encouragement." But he also re-asserted his claim to enter the rooms occupied by the Academy whenever he pleased, in the words :—"The charge I have of this building frequently renders it necessary for me to go through its apartments"; and to this claim, with the many possibilities of annoying interference which it involved, the Academy was strenuously opposed.

So a fresh set of resolutions was drawn up, bearing on this point and detailing the dispute between Sir Thomas and the Academy, and was printed for circulation among the members of the Board of Trustees and the Royal Institution. The most vital matter in their circular was embodied in a single paragraph :—"That the right which Sir Thomas claims of entering the exhibition rooms during the hanging of the pictures is altogether inadmissible, inasmuch as it would be subversive of one of the most essential laws of the Academy, and is inconsistent with what the Council conceive to be the terms on which the rooms are held by the Academy; that no reason is assigned by Sir Thomas, nor does any reason occur to the Council, why such access on the part of Sir Thomas should be necessary during the period of eight or ten days required for the arrangement of the pictures; and that it becomes essential for the Council to know whether such access be insisted on, either by the Honourable Board of Trustees or the Directors of the Royal Institution, and whether arrangements cannot be made for dispensing with it, in order that the Academy may be enabled to carry out the important provision of its laws on this subject." To this a reply was received from the Directors of the Royal Institution, acting under pressure from the Board of Trustees, to the effect that if the Academy intended to adhere to its resolution "it will be imperative upon the Directors to interrupt the arrangement by which the Academy have the use of the exhibition rooms during the months of February, March, and April in each year."

Upon receipt of this threat the Academy immediately forwarded a memorial to the Lords of the Treasury and a response to the Directors of the Royal Institution. In the memorial to the Treasury a request was made for what would have amounted to a transference to the Academy of the galleries of the Royal Institution and for other rooms necessary for properly carrying on

the work of the Academy; and, as well, for a money grant. In the response to the Royal Institution, the difficulties and dangers of the present position were recapitulated, and the necessity for a better arrangement was strongly urged. The Treasury referred the memorial to the Board of Trustees for consideration and report, and then refused to grant it; and the Board of Trustees, in June, 1844, sent, to the letter addressed by the Academy to the Royal Institution, an answer which shows plainly and rather offensively what was the attitude of the officials towards the body of Scottish artists. It is stated by the Trustees in this answer that "It is quite impossible for them, without incurring great responsibility, to acquiesce in withdrawing any part of the Royal Institution from being patent to the inspection of their Secretary or such other officers as may be confided in. Intrusted with the charge of a great and valuable property erected for public purposes, entirely exclusive of all views to the accommodation of the Scottish Academy or any other private association, and of far more importance to the public, they would under any circumstances deem their surrendering this right to any one corporation, but still more to a series of individuals changed every year, and of whose habits and even names they are ignorant—a gross dereliction of the duty committed to them—and accordingly, it never occurred either to the Royal Society or the Society of Antiquaries, or the lessees of the two apartments of which the Scottish Academy are sub-tenants, all of them consisting of persons of the highest consideration, to prefer a claim of so extraordinary a nature. Hence, from the period when this building was erected, the right of visitation in this Board has never been interrupted, questioned, or made the subject of complaint by any of them, or even by the Scottish Academy. And responsible as the Board is for the entire safety of the building, it never would, under any circumstances, have surrendered it or abridged it in any one particular. But in so far as the Scottish Academy is concerned, the thing is impossible, and it is to be regretted that the parties now maintaining this claim had not made themselves cognisant of the circumstances which render it so."

Further on in the letter, which contains much beside written in a spirit of contemptuous opposition to the Academy, it is stated that:—"It is and can be no consideration to the Trustees, that the Scottish Academy has enacted a regulation for the guidance of its own members, of which they know nothing, and by which they cannot be in any way affected, and which, if contrary to the regulations of this Public Board, it would not have been more than

was to be expected, had been immediately modified, so as to suit the circumstances in which that private corporation was placed in regard to the matter in question." Indeed, the correspondence throughout proves in the most definite manner that the officials of the Board were as ready as they had been in the past to resent the temerity of the Academy in presuming to exist and succeed without their assistance, and were as much disposed as ever to slight it and to deny its authority. They gave further evidence of this illiberal spirit by devising a scheme by which the Academy would be ejected from the Institution galleries—by arranging with the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the Sheriff of Midlothian that the Torrie collection of pictures should be hung in those galleries with a stipulation that it should not be removed from the walls so long as it remained in the charge of the Board.

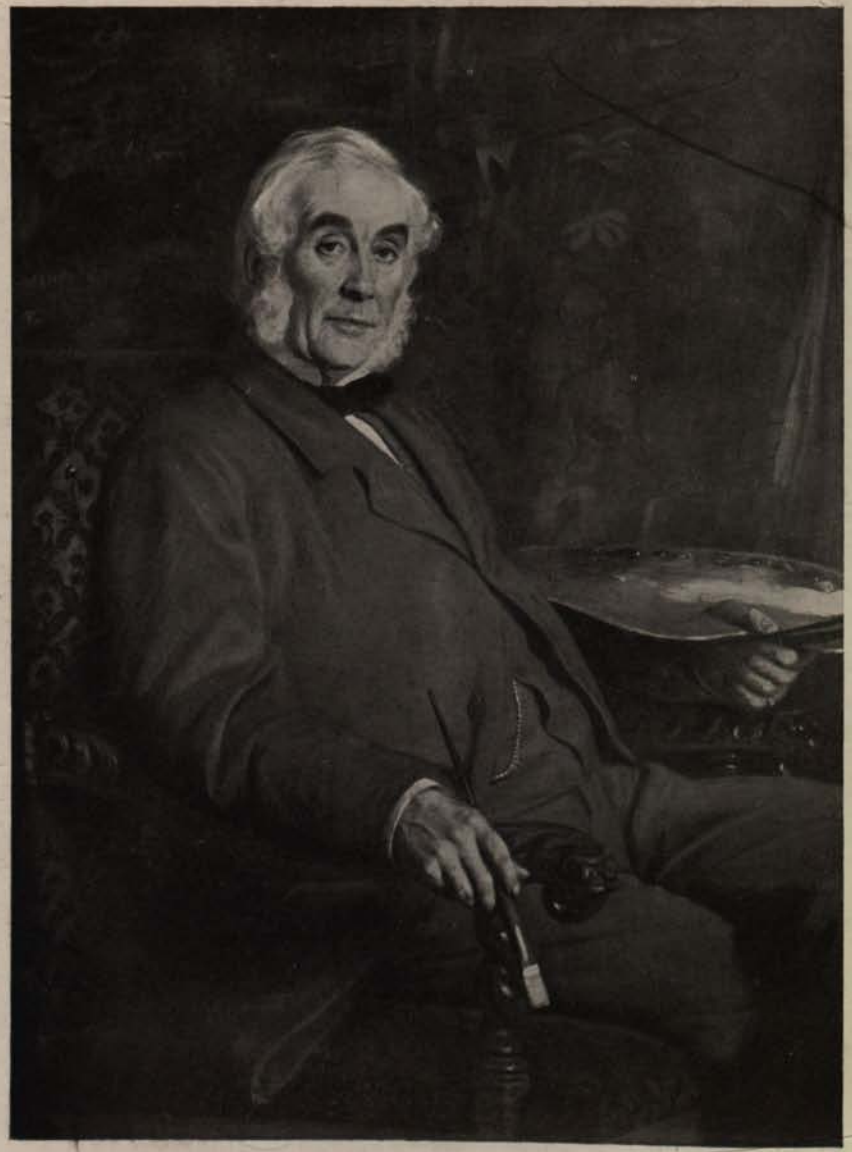
But in attempting this ingenious piece of retaliation the officials over-reached themselves and showed that they had underestimated the influence of the Academy, which not only induced the Lord Provost and the Sheriff to so modify the arrangement with regard to the Torrie collection that there should be no interference with the Academy's exhibitions, but also enlisted the active sympathy of the many members of the Board of Trustees who had hitherto remained in ignorance of the manner in which the artists were being treated. On October 15, 1845, a full meeting of the Board was called, at which the relations between that body and the Academy were discussed, and of which the result was that by a practically unanimous vote it was resolved to give the galleries as usual for the following year and to appoint a committee to go into the whole matter. Throughout this episode the position taken up by the Academy was strongly and ably supported in a series of articles by Sheriff Munro, which appeared in the "Edinburgh Evening Post." The articles were afterwards published in book form under the title "Scottish Art and National Encouragement."

While this discussion was in progress another question arose, with regard to which the Academy found itself obliged to take somewhat strong action. In the "statement as to the arrangements betwixt the Royal Scottish Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, the Honourable Board of Trustees for Scottish Manufactures, and the Royal Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts in Scotland, respecting the occupation by the Academy of apartments in the Royal Institution Building," which it had issued earlier in the year, there was a paragraph stating that "the Institution building had been erected by the Trustees in union with the Royal

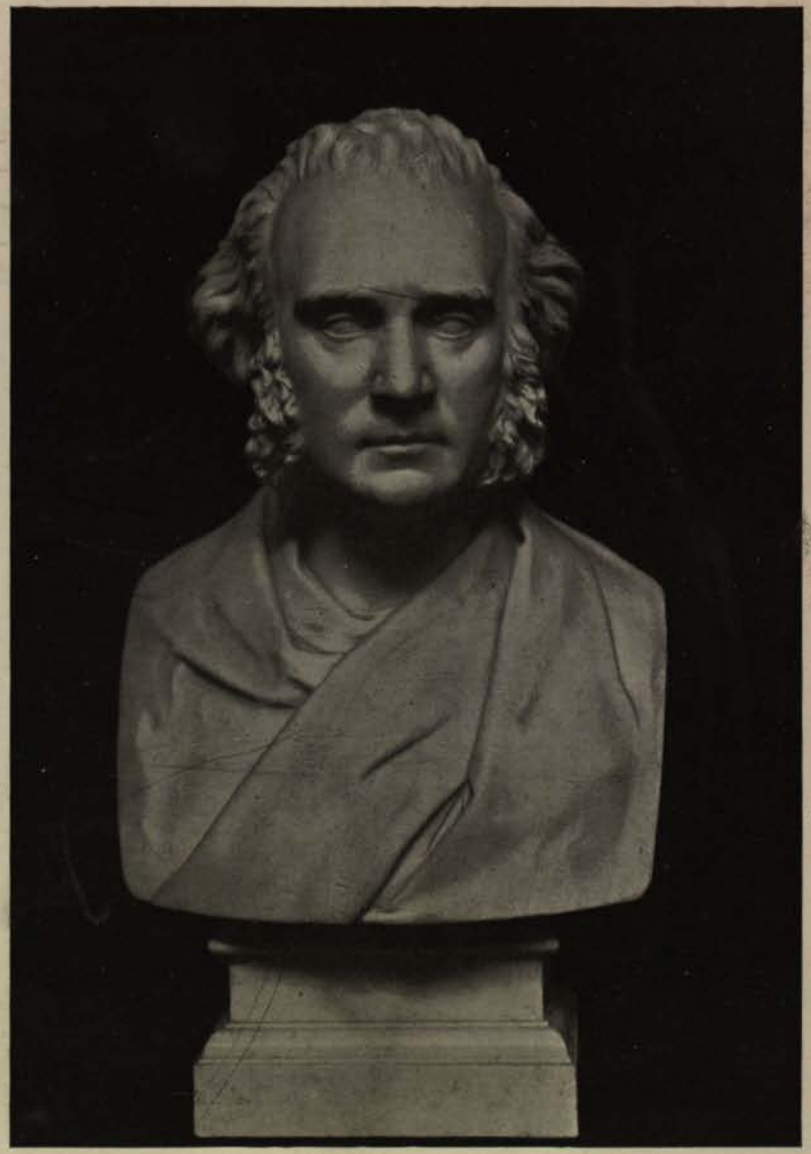
Institution Society, and partly for exhibitions of modern paintings; while the Society had acquired a number of valuable paintings, by means of the subscribed contributions of its members, but partly also from the proceeds of these exhibitions. It had also commenced a valuable library by means of funds procured wholly from this latter source"; to which statement an answer was published by the Secretary of the Royal Institution declaring that "in these words there are no less than four statements entirely unfounded in point of fact; two of which could not fail to be known by the President and Council of the Royal Scottish Academy to be so at the time they were written," and that "even to have made such statements without inquiry would have been highly culpable; but what can be said of persons like the President and Council of the Royal Scottish Academy, who, when the imputation in question was made, knew well it was without a shadow of foundation?"

Roused by such an attack, the Academy set to work to prove by ample documentary evidence that the Royal Institution had not kept the agreement, entered into in 1820, to set aside all the free proceeds of its exhibitions of modern paintings for the benefit of artists and their families, but had used much of the money obtained by these exhibitions in buying pictures for its gallery and books for its library; and with these proofs available demanded that an apology should be offered to the President and Council by the Directors of the Institution for the calumnious contradiction of the original statement made by the Academy, and that a full investigation of the matter should be undertaken by a qualified accountant. After waiting for ten months without even receiving an acknowledgment of the letter containing this demand, Mr. Elder, as the legal representative of the Academy, wrote to announce that action was about to be taken in a court of law, and by this threat, and by the intervention of Lord Cockburn, the Institution was induced to send the required apology and report on its affairs. The apology admitted that the personal imputations against the President and Council were "totally groundless," and fully retracted them; and the Report showed very definitely that the Academy had been completely justified in its assertion that the Directors of the Institution had purchased pictures and books with part of the proceeds of the exhibitions.

How well advised the Academy was in fighting so strenuously to advance its own interests and those of Scottish artists generally, was very quickly seen. It had beaten down the forces of the opposition arrayed against it, and had asserted its own dignity and authority



SIR DANIEL MACNEE (PRESIDENT 1876-1882).
BY JAMES ARCHER, R.S.A.



SIR GEORGE HARVEY (PRESIDENT 1864-1876).
BY JOHN HUTCHISON, R.S.A.

in a manner that showed it was a force which had to be reckoned with in all dealings with Scottish art. Accordingly it is not surprising that at last the Government began to give serious attention to the claims of a body which was so full of vitality and sturdy independence. A few months after the exposure of the Royal Institution a Government inquiry was ordered to be made into the relations between that Society, the Board of Trustees, and the Academy, and this inquiry was conducted by Mr. John Shaw Lefevre, one of the Secretaries of the Board of Trade, who gave in his report to the Treasury in December, 1847. His recommendations were accepted by the Government, and the Academy received an intimation that the Treasury was prepared to grant a sum of £10,000 towards the cost of erecting a suitable building in which there would be the necessary exhibition galleries and proper space for carrying on the work of the association.

Three years before, when its dispute with the Board of Trustees was at its height, the Academy had opened negotiations with the Lord Provost, and with the other people concerned, for a site on the Earthen Mound, and had received a very liberal response to the suggestions then made. So now that the project for building the galleries had received the sanction of the Treasury, this site was fixed upon, and plans and estimates were immediately prepared. But meanwhile, the intentions of the Government underwent a considerable change. The scheme, which at first contemplated only a building for the Academy, was enlarged to include the erection, as well, of a Scottish National Gallery of Fine Arts, and plans for carrying out this new idea were submitted by Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Playfair. On the ground of expense both were refused; but fresh plans for a less costly building were made by Mr. Playfair and accepted. The cost was to be met by a Parliamentary vote of £30,000, and by a contribution of £20,000 from the funds of the Board of Trustees; and though the general control of the whole building was eventually to be vested in the Board of Trustees, the Council was informed that it was "the intention of the Government not to charge the Academy any rent, as was the case with the Royal Academy of London, thus enabling the Academy to devote more of its funds to the furtherance of art, while extending to it a high recognition and status, as well as to do much otherwise for improving the beauty of Edinburgh, and for making that city eminently a seat of the fine arts."

The vote for the buildings was brought up in the House of Commons on August 12, 1850, and, to the acute disappointment of everyone

concerned, was refused, because it was vehemently opposed by Mr. Hume and Mr. Bright and some other members. But the Lord Provost of Edinburgh went immediately to London and explained to the opponents of the scheme how strongly it was supported by local opinion—adducing in evidence the fact that the Town Council was prepared to provide for £1000 a site of which the value was estimated as being between £30,000 and £40,000. On this the vote was brought up again and passed; and at last the scheme which was of so much moment not only to the Academy but also to all Scottish art-lovers was officially sanctioned. It is worth noting in this connection that just as that other important event in the career of the Academy, the granting of its charter, occurred immediately after the death of the first President, so this vote was passed a few months after the death of his successor. Sir William Allan had died on February 22, 1850; and John Watson Gordon was elected in his place, and in due course received the honour of knighthood.

The Academy had now the two things for which it had been striving for so many years—a charter and what was in effect a money grant, for by the provision that the new building was to be at its disposal rent free it would have available the sum, amounting to several hundreds a year, which it was paying for the Royal Institution galleries. But there still remained some doubt, owing to the wording of the Bill which had just been passed by the House of Commons, whether the position was quite as secure as it should have been, and whether the Academy might not after all be deprived of the advantages which it seemed to have gained. This doubt gave rise to some discussion at the meetings of the Council, but it was decided that no immediate action should be taken in the matter, despite the formal protest of Mr. Hamilton, who pointed out in a written statement "that the Bill contained no recognition or mention of the Academy and conferred on it no legal rights of any kind"; and further declared that "while a National Gallery of Art for Scotland was unquestionably an object of great importance, it was of equal or greater consequence that the living artists of the country should be established in an honourable and independent position. That there was no incompatibility between these two objects; and the Mound, with proper arrangements, could supply sufficient space for both; but the proposed measure, by delivering up the whole to the Board of Trustees, would place the Academy in a state of dependence, and might issue in its expulsion from the proposed building, and the measure thus tend to frustrate those great public

objects which led to the original establishment of the Academy, and which the Academy had publicly and strenuously advocated during the last six years."

The whole question remained in abeyance till 1854, when the building, of which the foundation stone had been laid by Prince Albert in the summer of 1850, was approaching completion. Then the President wrote to Sir William Johnston, who had held the office of Lord Provost four years before, and put the matter to him in the following words:—"Some doubts, very unexpected on my part, have of late been stated as to the purpose to which the new art galleries on the Mound are to be appropriated. The Town Council, under your chief magistracy, having been the party who, with the sanction of the City creditors, disposed of the valuable site on the Mound on which the building is erected, may I request that you will favour me with your understanding of what these arrangements were?"

To this Sir William Johnston returned a reply which is too long to quote fully, but from which the following significant extracts can be made:—"My understanding then clearly was, that in parting with the valuable piece of ground on the Earthen Mound at a nominal price, the Town Council would thereby enable the Academy, with the assistance of the Government, to realise Mr. Lefevre's plans, by procuring for themselves, and to be appropriated entirely to their own use, a gallery and other rooms, fitted in every respect for their objects and functions, and that such building would be applied to no other purpose whatever. I need not hesitate to say, that for anything short of this I never asked the Town Council and the other public boards I had to consult; and I am equally certain that if I had asked the ground for any less popular purpose it would never have been granted by these bodies; indeed, the National Gallery was put by us, as it was by Mr. Lefevre himself, second to the Gallery for the Royal Scottish Academy;" and further:—"It may be said the Act of Parliament gives neither the Corporation nor the Academy any control over these erections. This I am quite aware of, and I was led to acquiesce in the reasons given me at the time for its being so arranged, that the naming of the Academy in the Act would be likely to raise opposition to the grant in the House of Commons, seeing that the Royal Academy of London was said to be unpopular at the time with some members of the House; and that after the Bill was passed a Treasury minute would be drawn, putting the Academy in possession of one half of the building—a matter of little consequence, however, seeing the

disposition of the ground to the Trustees contains an express declaration on the subject."

That there were, however, some reasons for the apprehensions of the Academy was seen when the appropriation of the space in the new building was made by the Board of Trustees and confirmed by the Treasury early in 1855. Under this appropriation the Academy was given the five eastern galleries for four months in each year, and two rooms permanently for its Council chamber and library; and its collection of pictures was to be hung in the western galleries "while there is room," or in the eastern galleries "when these are not required by the Treasury for any purpose connected with the promotion of art." Such a half-hearted recognition of its claims was by no means what the Academy either expected or desired, and there was for a while some agitation about the matter. But all cause for anxiety was removed early in 1858, when Mr. James Wilson, Secretary to the Treasury, was sent to Edinburgh by the Government to make what rearrangement he might consider advisable. His investigations led to the drawing up of a fresh Treasury minute, which was passed later in the year.

The changes which were prescribed by this minute were of considerable importance, and many of them affected definitely the status and responsibility of the Academy. For the first time it was recognised as a body with public obligations and with educational functions, and not merely as an exhibiting society; and its right to official consideration was admitted both on the ground of its many past services to Scottish art and because it was assigned certain distinct duties as a teaching institution in the immediate future. The minute first defined the sources from which were to be derived the works of art of which the National Gallery collection was to consist, and stated that, in addition to the collections belonging to the Royal Institution and the Board of Manufactures, the Torrie Collection, and some others, "there is a most valuable collection, the exclusive property of the Royal Academy. From the close identity which the Academy has from the first had with the scheme of building and establishing a National Gallery, and from the fact that that building has been raised in great measure to meet their own want, and altogether for the purpose of developing the art in which they occupy so conspicuous a place, as well as from their expressed intentions, my Lords cannot entertain a doubt that the pictures belonging to the Royal Academy, as well now as in future, will form a part of the great national collection." It was further declared that "with regard to the officers to be appointed, my

2 Hill Street Edinburgh
10th Janry 1866

Sir

I duly received your letters of the 4th and 9th inst the latter enclosed an excerpt from the Minutes of General Meeting of the Royal Scottish Academy held yesterday

My letter of the 29th Decem was not intended by me to bear the construction put on it by the Council.

but since the Matter has been brought before a General Meeting of the Academy. I have no hesitation in complying with their demand, and do now express my Regret that I should have inadvertently interfered with last years dinner arrangements not then being aware that there had been made upon anxious consideration by a committe appointed under the direction and subject to the approval of the Council

I am Sir
your obd Servt
Sam Bough

D. O. Hill Esq Sec R.S.A.

Lords feel that in respect to the principal curator and keeper, it is essential, for the beneficial and harmonious working of the National Gallery, and for securing the confidence of the public, that he should always be selected from the members of the Royal Academy, a provision, too, which my Lords think only fair and reasonable, considering the number of pictures which, forming part of the Gallery, now belong to the Royal Academy, and the still greater number which in future they are likely to add to it;" and accordingly it was stated that "My Lords are pleased to appoint" Mr. Johnstone, the then Treasurer of the Academy, to be the first occupant of this important office.

In its educational provisions the minute referred to the fact that the life school which had been originally instituted by the Academy had been given up because there was scarcely room for it in addition to the other life school which was carried on by the Board of Manufactures. But after recommending that the Board's school should be affiliated to the Science and Art Department, and so cease to be an independent concern, it declares that "a line should be drawn between the functions of that school and those of the Royal Academy, in order that they may work in harmony and with more effect in relation to each other. Upon full consideration of this point, and after consulting the best authorities upon it, my Lords have come to the conclusion that the line is to be drawn where the Antique finishes and the Life begins. For all the purposes of Art, as applied to manufactures and trades, they appear to my Lords to be attainable by students studying up to the point of the Antique inclusive, and that the Life is chiefly necessary for those students who desire to follow the profession of art in painting. The latter object, therefore, it appears to my Lords, can be best attained by a school under the directions and control of the Academy. My Lords would here add that every consideration they have been able to give to the subject convinces them that nothing is so likely to give vigour and success to all the objects which the Royal Academy has in view, as the establishment and energetic conduct of a Life School under its direct and entire control. My Lords therefore express their earnest hope that the Royal Academy will, as soon as the Life class now belonging to the School of Design is given up, establish one of their own;" and for this school one of the rooms occupied by the Academy, or one in some other part of the building, as might be necessary, was assigned.

It was with good reason that the Council of the Academy recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the document from the

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Treasury was read their great satisfaction with its provisions, for after a struggle of more than thirty years the Society had earned the reward due to it for all its strivings and sacrifices. Its progress had been very unfairly hampered, during its earlier years, by the very people who should have been the first to give it encouragement if they had really had at heart the best interests of Scottish art; and professional jealousies and private animosities had over and over again been used against it to prevent its claims for consideration being properly presented to the Government officials. But it had triumphed at last, and its rivals were either removed or shorn of the power to do it harm. Its way was now clear to carry on its work under proper conditions and without any questioning of its status and authority—and without any danger of malicious interference with its activity.

So it entered now upon a prolonged spell of quiet and uneventful prosperity. The public interest in its Exhibitions continued to increase, and this interest was further stimulated by special shows which were held in the Academy galleries every now and again in the intervals between the annual Exhibitions. For some of these—like the exhibitions of works by deceased and living artists, in 1863 and 1880, and of water-colours and black-and-white drawings, in 1885 and 1887—the Academy was responsible, and others—like the collected exhibition of paintings by Raeburn, in 1876, and the exhibitions of Scottish national portraits, in 1883 and 1884—were organised by the Board of Manufactures. The Raeburn show was of the greatest value as a complete and definite assertion of his powers, for it included three hundred and twenty-five of his canvases, and put beyond question his right to be counted among the greatest of the British masters. Thirty years ago the superlative merit of his pictures was scarcely realised, even in Scotland, so that this exhibition was something of a revelation to art lovers, and may fairly be said to have marked the beginning of that wider appreciation which is to-day accorded to his art.

During this peaceful period of close on thirty years the office of President passed from Sir J. Watson Gordon, who died in 1864, to Sir George Harvey; next, in 1876, to Sir Daniel Macnee, and on his death, in 1882, to Sir William Fettes Douglas. His Presidency, which lasted until 1891, is memorable because it saw important amendments made in the constitution of the Academy. Towards the end of the 'eighties the feeling, which had been growing for some while, that the Academy ought to be brought up to date, became very strong among the outside artists, and found definite

expression as well among the members or the Society. It was seen that, owing to the large increase in the number of professional workers whose merits called for recognition, a new condition of affairs had come into existence which would necessitate a change of policy. There were various modern phases of art practice which called for attention, and there was a certain amount of reparation due to architecture because no member of this profession had been elected into the Academy for some considerable period. But under the charter which had been granted in 1838 the course which the Academy had to follow was strictly defined, and any departure from this course was impossible, even though it was advocated by a majority of the members.

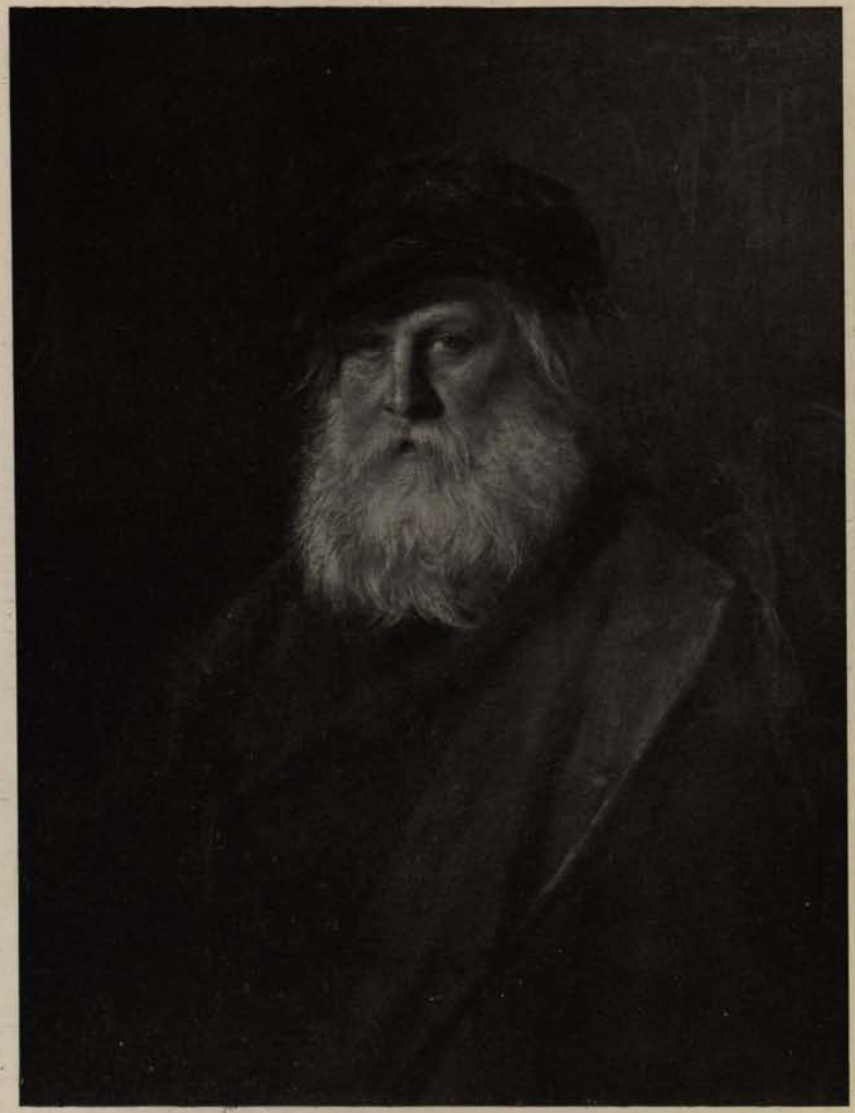
In view of the change in the conditions of Scottish Art, a committee was appointed to consider what was best to be done, and on the recommendation of this committee an extension and modification of the terms of the charter was submitted to the Privy Council and sanctioned in 1891. Among the more important of these new provisions was one which gave the Academy power to add to the number of its Associates as it might see fit; and another prescribed that any member, elected in the future, who should be absent from Scotland for more than three years, should fall automatically out of the list, but should, on his return, be readmitted when a vacancy occurred. This provision was necessary because, if the places of absent members could not be filled, there would have been some difficulty in carrying on efficiently the work which the Academy had to do, while the condition as to readmission made it possible for men whose services were of value to be called upon to take up their duties again after a temporary absence from home.

No time was lost in taking advantage of the facilities afforded by the revision of the charter, for in 1892 and 1893 as many as twenty-two Associates were elected, nine of whom were architects. About half of these Associates were artists living in Glasgow or Aberdeen, both of which cities had become important art centres. This large addition was not made without considerable opposition from a section of the Academy, headed by Sir George Reid, who had succeeded Sir William Fettes Douglas in the Presidency in 1891, and as a result of this opposition some further revisions of the charter were decided upon to guard against any such extensive increase in the number of members in the future. But though no Associates were chosen in 1894, and though the elections since have been on a much smaller scale than those in 1892 and 1893,

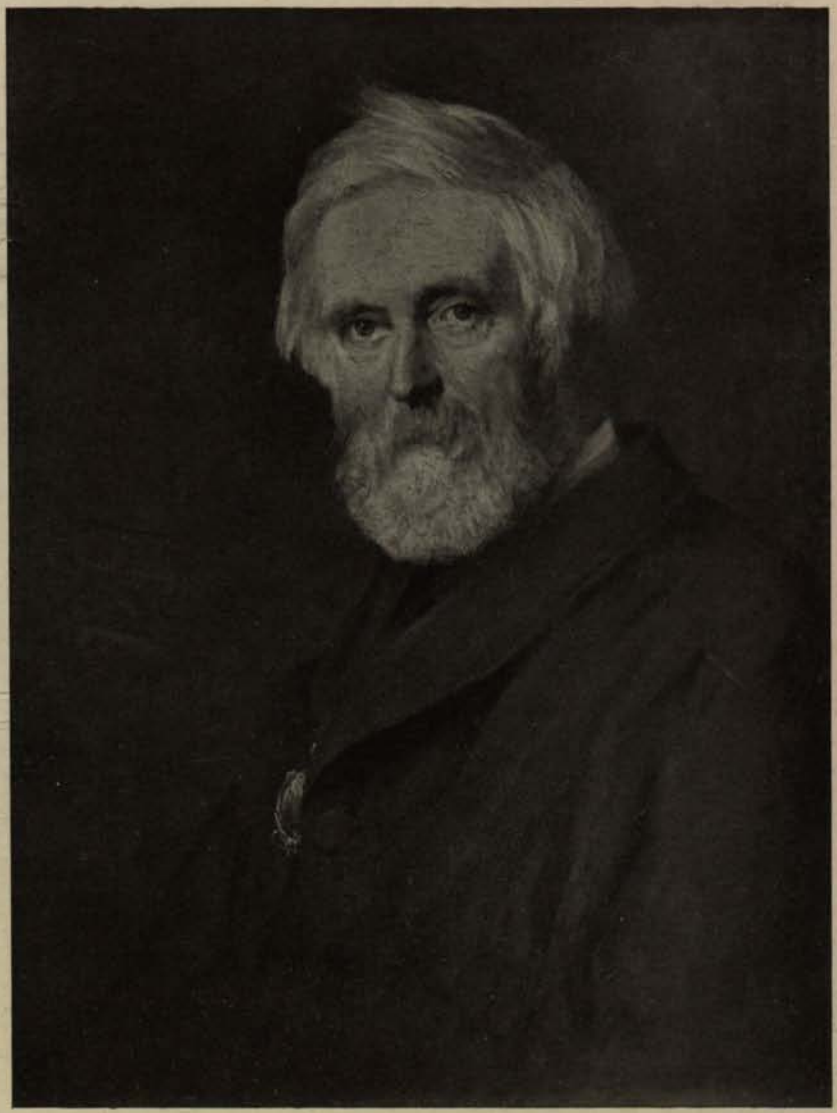
this one outburst had certainly some advantages, inasmuch as it brought official recognition to many artists of great ability and disposed finally of the objection, which had previously been raised on many occasions, that the Academy was an association of Edinburgh men rather than a national institution.

Some justification for what was held by many people to be undue haste on the part of the Academy to admit Associates can be found in the fact that a new exhibiting body, the Society of Scottish Artists, was formed in 1891 to afford the younger men opportunities for bringing their work before the public—opportunities which they felt were denied to them so long as the membership of the Academy was so limited and the space available in its galleries for outside contributions was so small. The creation of this new Society had to some extent the effect of reviving the earlier bad feeling between the Academy and the Board of Manufactures, for the Board, exercising its right of control over the galleries on the Mound, granted to the Scottish artists the use of the exhibition rooms annually during part of the time in which they were not occupied by the Academy. This grant was not contrary to the terms of the 1858 Treasury Minute, but the Academicians felt, reasonably enough, that the Board, by giving to an opposition Society the free use of galleries which they held for four months in each year in return for the fulfilment of onerous and expensive educational responsibilities, was hardly acting with sufficient impartiality or with a right appreciation of the position of the older institution. Between the Academy and the Society of Scottish Artists quite friendly relations have been maintained; most of the founders of the Society have in course of time been elected Associates, and various members of the Academy have taken part in the affairs of the Society; the quarrel, if quarrel it can be called, has been with the Board only.

Another and more serious difficulty, arising out of the position of affairs in the Scottish art world, had been developing rapidly during the later years of the nineteenth century. The number of painters whose work was worthy of acceptance for exhibition had enormously increased, and the galleries on the Mound could not properly accommodate the many contributions which were placed annually at the disposal of the Academy. Previous to 1870 no absolute limit was imposed upon the number of works which any individual artist might exhibit, but about that date a regulation was made under which members could send seven works and outsiders five. These numbers were reduced in 1893 to five and four respectively, and



DAVID O. HILL, R.S.A. BY ROBERT HERDMAN, R S A.



SIR W. FETTES DOUGLAS (PRESIDENT 1882-1891).
BY SIR GEORGE REID, P.R.S.A.

about the end of the century were still further reduced, despite much opposition, to three for members and non-members alike.

Simultaneously with this accession of difficulties, by which the working of the Academy as an exhibiting institution was being hampered, the Scottish National Gallery was outgrowing the space which had been assigned to it by the Treasury minute. About 1894 the collection had become so congested that a committee of the Board of Manufactures was appointed to discuss, under the guidance of Sir George Reid, ways of dealing with the problem. As a result, about a hundred and fifty pictures were removed, some because they were in a hopeless condition of decay, and others to form a loan collection which was to be lent for exhibition in any of the Scottish provincial towns which might make application for it. The remainder were rearranged, and the diploma works of the Academicians were hung in two of the galleries occupied by the Academy—a makeshift way out of the difficulty which caused a new inconvenience because these works had to be taken down and stored away for four months in every year while the galleries were wanted for the Academy exhibition, and which obviously would lead to more trouble in the future as the collection went on growing.

In one respect the steady increase in the total of pictures in the Scottish National Gallery was particularly gratifying, despite the strain which it threw upon the custodians of the collection. All the new acquisitions had come from private donors, from the Academy, or from purchases made out of certain funds at the disposal of the Board of Manufactures—no grant for art purposes had hitherto been received from the Treasury by the Gallery, though an annual subsidy was given to the corresponding institutions in London and Dublin. But the fact that the Gallery had succeeded without Government assistance was not accepted in Scotland as a reason why this assistance should always be denied, and from time to time protests were made against the niggardliness of the Treasury by Scottish Members of Parliament. In 1902 a group of members, Scotch and English, succeeded in inducing the Chancellor of the Exchequer to order an enquiry to be made into the management of the funds administered by the Board of Manufactures in connection with art matters in Scotland, and this enquiry was held in Edinburgh in October of that year, by a committee appointed by the Secretary for Scotland, which consisted of Mr. Akers Douglas, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, Sir Walter Armstrong, Director of the Irish National Gallery, Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, and Mr. J. R. Buchanan. Much evidence was taken, and in

August, 1903, the committee issued a series of recommendations dealing with the future, not only of the National Gallery, but also of the other bodies quartered in the buildings on the Mound, and of the National Portrait Gallery as well.

The principal recommendations affecting the National Gallery and the Academy were these: that the control of the Board of Manufactures over the building occupied by these two institutions should be abolished, and that a smaller Board of Trustees should be established to manage the affairs of the National Gallery; that a new building should be erected for the national collection, and that the whole of the galleries jointly occupied by the Academy and the National Gallery should be handed over to the Academy alone; that the National Gallery with respect to grants for purchase of pictures and maintenance generally, should be put on the same footing as those in England and Ireland, and such disbursements should be provided for out of imperial funds and not made a matter of local responsibility; and that a new art school, planned as far as possible on the lines of that recently established at Glasgow, should be substituted for the one which had been so long controlled by the Board of Trustees.

Naturally, these recommendations were welcomed not only by the Academy, which found in them promise of very desirable advantages and of increased facilities in the near future, but also by the great mass of Scottish art lovers. There was also in the report of the Committee a hint that the Treasury ought to do something to atone for past neglect of art interests in Scotland, a neglect which had been as persistent as it was indefensible. The creation and up-keep of the Scottish National Gallery had been left entirely to local enterprise, and no imperial assistance had ever been given to make more efficient the working of an institution which necessarily involved considerable expenditure. Help was even denied to it for special purposes, as on the occasion of the sale of the Hamilton collection in 1885, when the Scottish Academy petitioned ineffectually for such a grant in aid of purchases as had already been made to the English and Irish galleries. All that had been accomplished in connection with both the National Gallery and the Academy had been due to the unsupported, and to a large extent unrecognised, energy of the Scottish people; and even the limited amount of imperial encouragement which had been given in other parts of the British Isles had, for no discoverable reason, been denied to Scotland. The Government, to establish in this matter nothing more than a bare equality between the sister kingdoms, had serious arrears to

make good, and the Committee, by hinting at this, was at least recording on opinion that the time had arrived when belated justice should be done.

Three years elapsed before the report of the Committee produced a practical result. But in December, 1906, a Scottish National Galleries Bill was passed, which embodied part at least of the recommendations. The questions under discussion were not easy to settle, for there were many difficulties and complications which had to be met and adjusted, and there were a number of conflicting interests which had to be considered. But ultimately a way was found which, if it was something of a compromise, gave, at all events, some substantial advantages to each of the institutions concerned. The idea of erecting a new home for the National Gallery has been abandoned —for the present, anyhow—and the problem of finding additional room for a collection which has utterly outgrown the accommodation provided for it, has been solved by handing over the part of the building occupied by the Academy to the National Gallery Trustees, in this way doubling the space they have hitherto had regularly available. The Academy has instead been assigned the old building of the Royal Institution, and fresh accommodation is to be found for the other societies which at present are located there.

That a compromise of this sort would meet with unqualified approval from all the people interested was hardly to be expected. But the committee of the Academy which was concerned with the Bill, felt that what was provided, if it was less than might have been expected from the recommendations of the 1902 committee, would be so unquestionably better than what had been in existence before, that any active opposition would be inadvisable, and consequently the Bill was accepted, though not unanimously. The new arrangement has certainly this advantage, that by housing the Academy and the National Gallery in separate buildings the danger of the two institutions clashing, or of one hampering in any way the work of the other, ceases to exist, and each is put into a position to continue its development without having to make inconvenient concessions for the sake of temporary peace and quietness. Opposition to the scheme in the hope that more might be gained by continued agitation would of course have been well within the right of the Academy, which had by the difference between the terms of the Bill and the views expressed by the Departmental Committee, suffered some disappointment, but in agitation for possibilities an acceptable certainty might have been lost.

It will be some little while—a year or two probably—before the

changes prescribed can be made fully effective. The present occupants of the Royal Institution building have to be accommodated in new premises, and the galleries will need some amount of reconstruction to fit them for the exhibitions of the Academy. But when the necessary work has been carried out the Academy will have at its disposal nearly double the line space which is provided in its present rooms, the National collection will have far wider limits within which to expand, and the new Art School, of which the Academy life class will form part, will afford to students facilities as complete as are offered by any existing institution of its type. What the future may bring it would be futile to attempt to prophesy; but by the analogy of the past it may be safely said that the difficulties which may arise will be faced and fought with courage by an association which has never shown itself unequal to any emergency. The Royal Scottish Academy, indeed, affords during its history of eighty years a striking illustration of the value of persistent effort, and of the importance of consistent adherence to a well-considered and logical policy. It has had from the beginning a proper sense of its own dignity, and it has always upheld its convictions with a sturdy independence which deserves sincere admiration. Possibly the fact that the road it had to travel in its earlier years was made none too smooth for it, has had something to do with the manner of its growing up; if there had been no obstructions to remove, no enemies to overcome, it might have grown sleek and fat for want of exercise and lost its capacity for robust progress.

But it stands now in the front rank of British art institutions, and there is little room for doubt that by its services as an exhibiting society, and by its activity as a teaching centre, it has helped largely to bring into existence and keep together that large body of artists which does so much honour to Scotland in the present day. Under the Presidency of Sir James Guthrie—who succeeded to this office on the resignation of Sir George Reid in 1902—it is continuing in a course which is clearly destined to bring it fresh honours and further additions to its high repute. It has sown the seeds of a rich harvest by its liberal policy and firm adherence to solid principles, and what it is reaping now is but a fair return for its laborious efforts in the past.

A. L. BALDRY.

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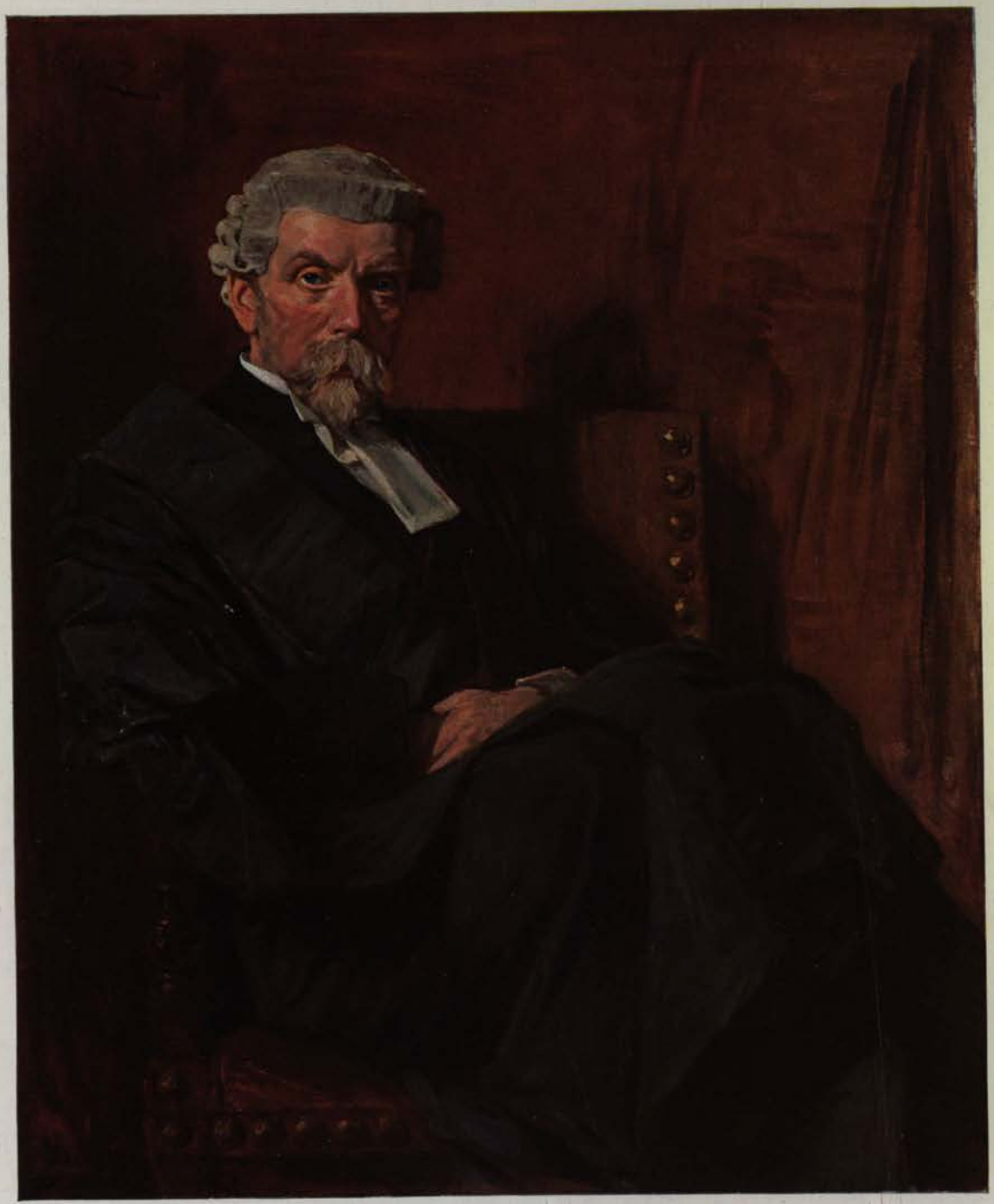

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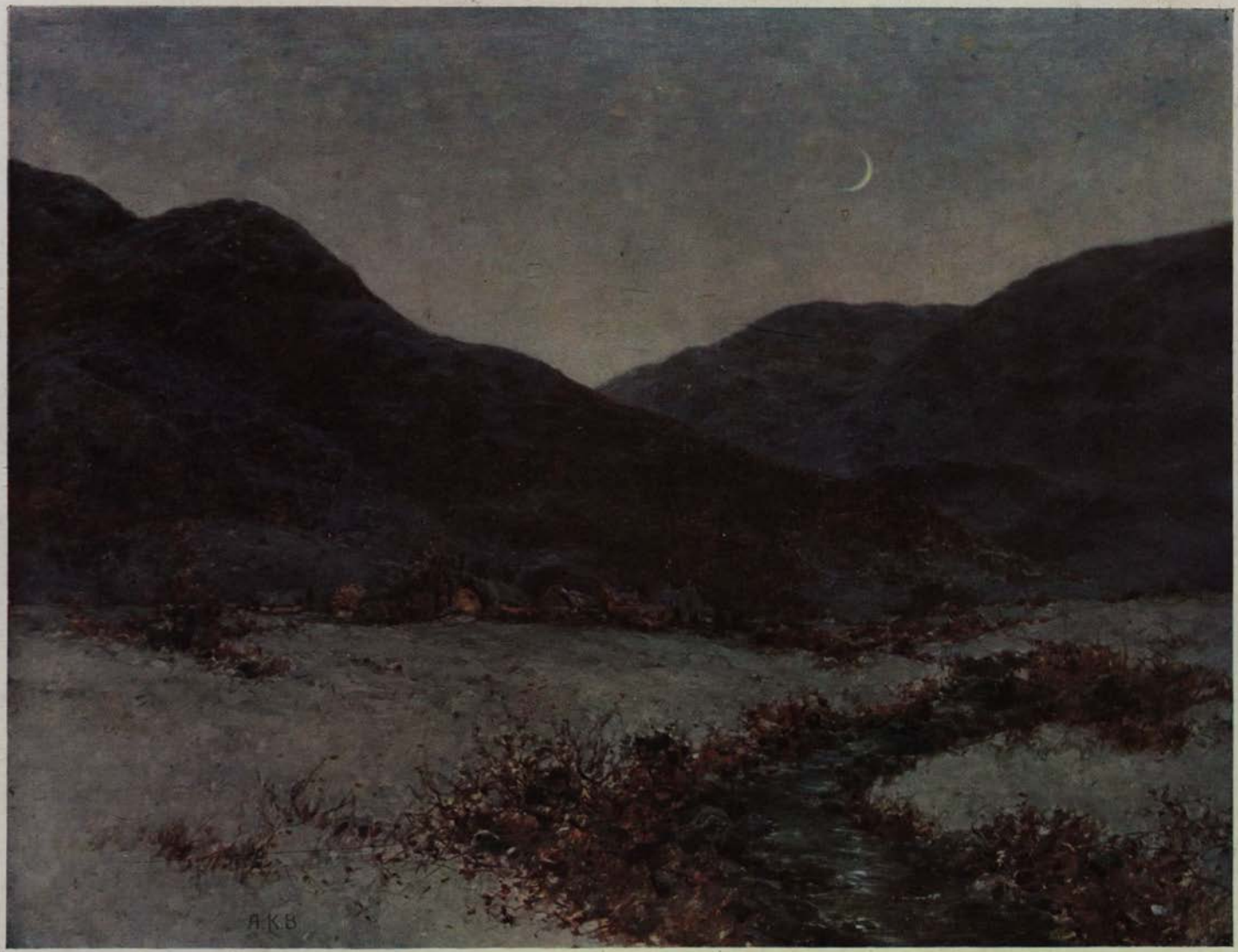

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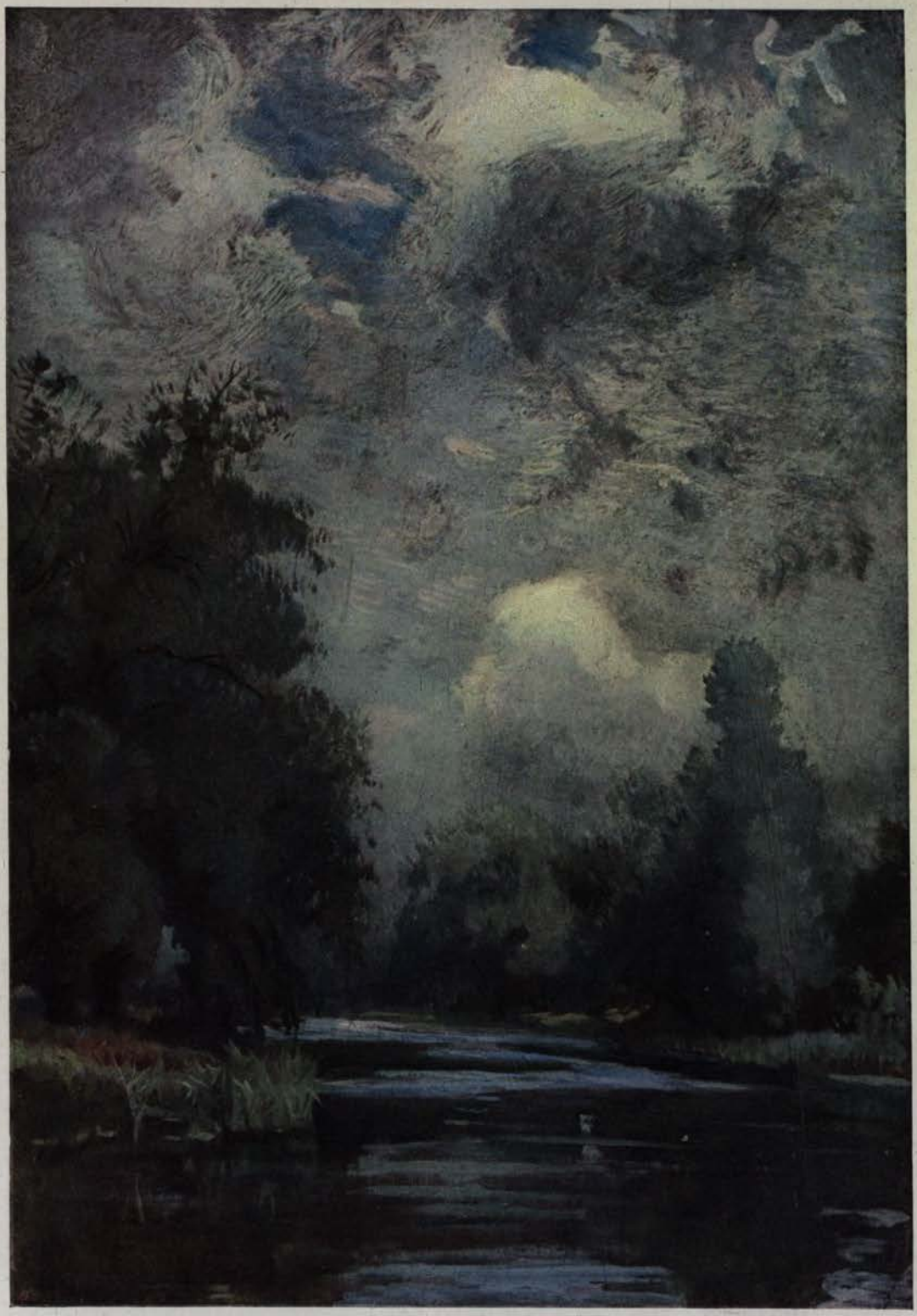

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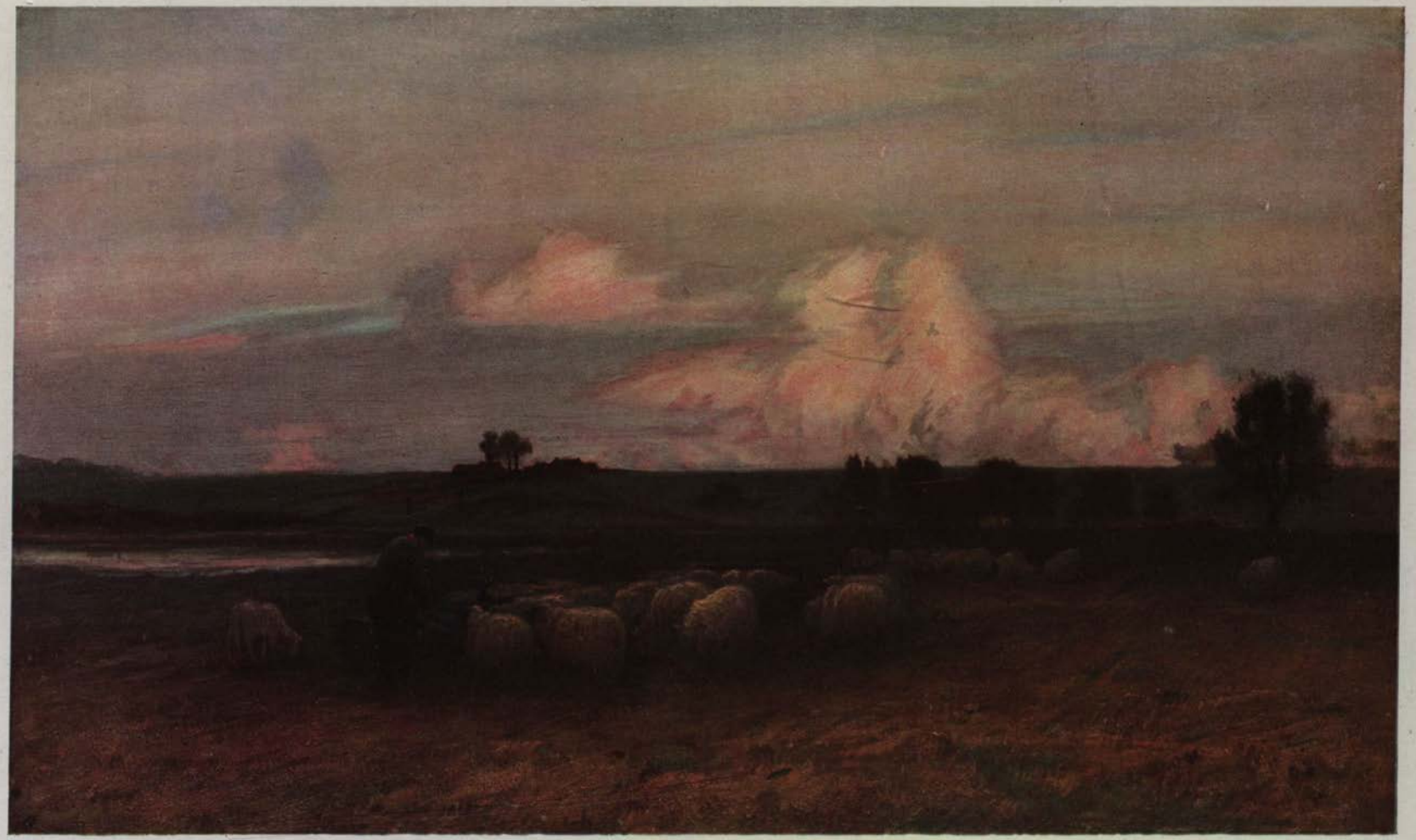

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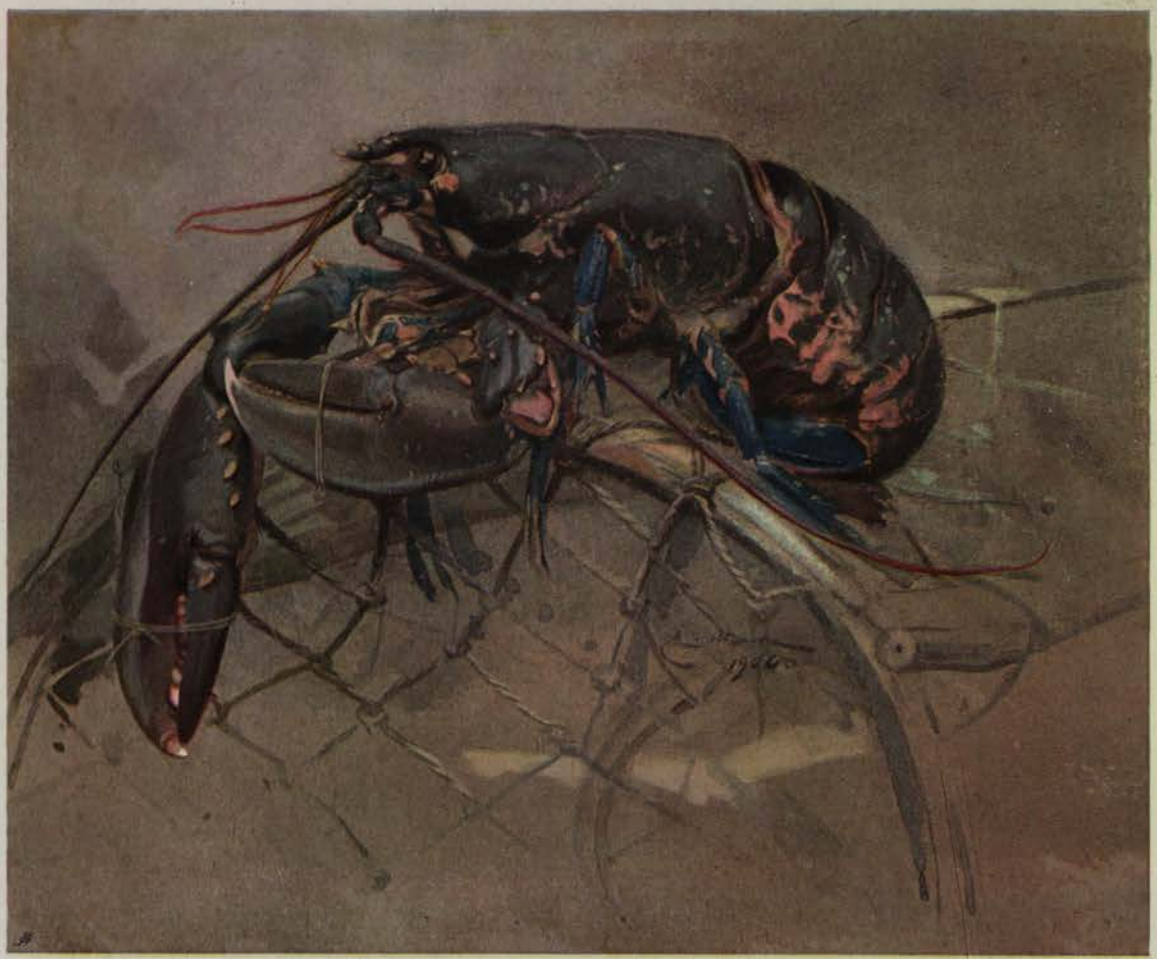

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